



RMA
RURAL MUNICIPALITIES
of ALBERTA

RMA Advocacy Report Card

Spring 2019



RMA Advocacy Report Card: Spring 2019

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Introduction

The Advocacy Report Card is divided into two sections.

- **Section 1** provides detailed information on the government response to the fall 2018 resolutions and includes the Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) Board of Directors' reaction to the response as well as anticipated follow up.
- **Section 2** updates members by reporting on all active resolutions, grouped by advocacy area.

Please note that any reference to the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties or AAMDC in the Advocacy Report Card is equivalent to the Rural Municipalities of Alberta or RMA.

Definition of Terms

Following the adoption of resolutions at RMA conventions, resolutions are sent to the appropriate level of government for response. Once a response is received, RMA labels the resolution with one of five indicators which determines the status of that resolution. The intention of providing a status for each resolution is to evaluate whether the government response meets the intent of the resolution. The status is not intended to reflect RMA's advocacy efforts on a resolution.

Below are the descriptions of all resolution ranking statuses.

STATUS	DESCRIPTION
Accepted	Meets RMA criteria as outlined in a) the resolution and b) as per the expectations of the Board of Directors.
Accepted in Principle	The development addresses that action is being taken to meet the intent of the resolution, but further action is required.
Accepted in Part	Some resolutions include multiple 'asks' in the operative clause. This status indicates that one of the 'asks' has been met while others require further action.
Intent Not Met	The intent of the resolution has not been met as outlined in the resolution or the current developments do not meet the approval of the Board of Directors.
Incomplete Information	RMA has not received enough information to assign a status. Further follow-up is required for RMA to make an informed decision on how to proceed.

Section 1: Government Responses to Fall 2018 Resolutions

RMA recently received responses to the resolutions adopted at the fall 2018 convention from the Government of Alberta and Government of Canada. The following table provides an overview of the initial assessment to resolutions following the response. **RMA emphasizes that this table only reflects the initial response received from the Government of Alberta and Government of Canada and that advocacy efforts on all resolutions are in progress.**

Reactions at a Glance

#	RESOLUTION NAME	STATUS
1-18F	Provincial Contribution to Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program	Intent Not Met
2-18F	Annual Release Date of Assessment Year Modifiers	Intent Not Met
3-18F	Federal and Provincial Funding of Municipal Broadband Projects	Accepted in Part
4-18F	Enabling High-Speed Internet Access for Rural Alberta	Intent Not Met
5-18F	Alberta Energy Regulator Requirements for Acquiring and Holding Energy Licences and Approval	Intent Not Met
6-18F	Securing Municipal Property Taxes in the Event of Bankruptcy or Insolvency	Intent Not Met
7-18F	Municipal and Privately-Owned Protected Areas Inventory	Intent Not Met
8-18F	Restricting the Consumption of Cannabis based on Regulations for Liquor Consumption	Intent Not Met
9-18F	Impact of the Alberta Wetland Policy on the Cost of Maintaining Public Road Infrastructure	Intent Not Met
10-18F	Community Peace Officer Access to the Canadian Police Information Centre	Accepted in Principle
11-18F	Rural Municipalities of Alberta Represents Municipalities on <i>Water Act</i> Approvals	Intent Not Met
12-18F	Multi-Stakeholder Committee to Work at Reducing the Use of Potable Water by the Oil and Gas Industry in Alberta	Intent Not Met

13-18F	TELUS Failure to Maintain Landline Operations	Incomplete Information
14-18F	Reclamation of Non-Producing Oil and Gas Sites on Agricultural Lands Owned by Bankrupt Companies	Incomplete Information
15-18F	Wetland Mitigation Directive – Restoration and Compensation	Accepted in Principle
16-18F	Demand Meters and Rate Riders	Intent Not Met
17-18F	Alberta Environment and Parks Additional Resources for <i>Water Act</i> Approvals	Intent Not Met
18-18F	Utility Conflict in Municipal Right of Ways	Intent Not Met
19-18F	Separation of Industrial Hemp from Cannabis Regulations	Accepted
20-18F	Decommissioning Costs for Wind Energy Developments	Intent Not Met
21-18F	Scrap Metal (Copper) Theft	Accepted in Principle
22-18F	Amendment to the Wildlife Regulations Regarding Cougars	Intent Not Met
23-18F	Social Well-Being of An Employee and Domestic Violence – Occupational Health and Safety Act)	Accepted in Part
24-18F	Review of Education Funding Formula	Intent Not Met

Resolution 1-18F

Provincial Contribution to Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program

Mackenzie County

Carried

► **Advocacy Target: Alberta Infrastructure, Alberta Municipal Affairs**

WHEREAS the Municipal Sustainability Initiative (MSI) has allowed municipalities to undertake critical projects of benefit to all Albertans; and

WHEREAS MSI plays a major role in providing infrastructure renewal for communities throughout Alberta; and

WHEREAS municipalities across Alberta have come to rely on MSI funding to pay for critical infrastructure projects annually; and

WHEREAS the Government of Alberta has entered into an agreement with the Government of Canada to provide funding through the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP); and

WHEREAS the Government of Alberta has recently announced that municipalities must use MSI funds as the provincial share of the ICIP when applying for funds through the program;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that RMA advocate to the Government of Alberta to provide additional funding to municipalities for the provincial contribution of Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program funding.

Government Response

Alberta Infrastructure

Given Alberta's current fiscal situation and the finite resources available to support capital projects, new provincial funding to meet provincial cost share requirements are not feasible at this time. Existing grant programs are available to support municipalities, such as the Municipal Sustainability Initiative (MSI), the Alberta Community Resilience Program, and the Alberta Municipal Water/Wastewater Partnership. Given these funding options, the Government of Alberta (GoA) has made the decision to give municipalities the choice and flexibility to leverage these existing grant programs to meet the provincial cost share requirements of the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP).

The province has received a large volume of Expressions of Interest seeking ICIP funding, and the total requested amount far exceeds the province's federal funding allocation. For example, the Community, Culture, and Recreation stream is currently oversubscribed by 540 per cent. As a result of this situation, the GoA will need to make difficult decisions to prioritize projects important to Alberta's communities, taking into account available provincial and federal funding.

Alberta Municipal Affairs

The province requires that municipalities use MSI funding as the provincial matching contribution for municipal projects under the ICIP Community, Culture and Recreation stream. Given Alberta's current fiscal situation, new spending to meet this provincial commitment is not feasible as Alberta has finite funding available to support capital projects. As a result, the only way for municipalities to access funding

for the ICIP Community, Culture and Recreation stream is to allow the provincial funding commitment to be from municipal MSI allocations.

RMA Reaction and Follow-up

The Government of Alberta response indicates that due to fiscal restraints additional funding is not available to support municipalities in leveraging funding under the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP) beyond the use of existing provincial grants that support the same project types as those eligible under ICIP.

RMA appreciates the fiscal challenges facing the Government of Alberta and the challenges that federal cost-share requirements can have on provincial budgets. However, ICIP presents a unique opportunity to leverage federal funding to cover a significant portion of the costs of infrastructure projects that would otherwise be entirely a municipal or provincial (through grant funding) responsibility. Additionally, Municipal Sustainability Initiative (MSI) funding is intended to support long-term municipal capital planning and expecting municipalities to redirect that funding to apply to ICIP-supported projects contradicts the emphasis that the Government of Alberta has placed on long-term planning in recent years.

RMA appreciates that, as identified in Alberta Infrastructure's response, ICIP's Community, Culture, and Recreation stream, which is most likely to require municipalities to use funds to meet provincial cost-share requirements, is already significantly oversubscribed. However, this is not an indicator that the provincial cost-share contribution is meeting the needs of most municipalities in the province, but rather that many of Alberta's municipalities are so in need of infrastructure funding that they are willing to divert previously planned MSI funding to pursue ICIP-supported projects.

This resolution is assigned a status of **Intent Not Met**, and RMA will advocate for the more strategic leveraging of provincial funding in future federal grant programs.

Resolution 2-18F

Annual Release Date of Assessment Year Modifiers

Mountain View County

Carried

► **Advocacy Target: Alberta Municipal Affairs**

WHEREAS Alberta Municipal Affairs sets the assessment year modifiers at no set timeline; and

WHEREAS the *Municipal Government Act* requires municipalities to pass a balanced budget; and

WHEREAS many rural municipalities receive significant revenue from linear properties; and

WHEREAS there has been volatility in linear assessment values in recent years; and

WHEREAS other types of funding have become more uncertain and the need for more timely assessment year modifier information has become more critical to ensure realistic budgets; and

WHEREAS municipalities are often required to develop budgets based on assessment year modifier estimates when final modifier figures are not yet available; and

WHEREAS if the final modifier figures vary from the estimates, the municipality's budget can be significantly impacted; and

WHEREAS many municipalities pass budgets prior to January 1st of the budget year;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta request the Government of Alberta to set the annual date of release of assessment year modifiers at September 15th or the nearest business day afterwards to allow municipalities to be properly informed when making budget decisions.

Government Response

Alberta Municipal Affairs

The province is aware that municipalities use the Assessment Year Modifiers (AYMs) to inform their budget discussions, and we make every effort to provide draft and final AYM as soon as possible each year. Any assessment prepared in accordance with the *Municipal Government Act* must be an estimate of the value of a property on July 1 of the assessment year. Based on this date, the soonest the ministry is able to receive the information required to set AYM is on, or about, August 31. This timing means that the ministry is only able to provide draft AYM to municipalities on, or about, September 15.

RMA Reaction and Follow-up

The Government of Alberta response indicates that due to requirements within the *Municipal Government Act* requiring assessed values to be based on a July 1 date, the process of gathering and analyzing assessment data and developing the annual assessment year modifier (AYM) cannot be significantly changed. RMA understands the impact of these regulatory requirements.

RMA will follow up with Alberta Municipal Affairs to discuss the possibility of amending the *Matters Relating to Assessment And Taxation Regulation* to change the July 1 estimate date to better allow the finalized AYM to be shared with municipalities at a date that better aligns with the municipal budget

cycle. Additionally, as this resolution was likely partly necessitated due to the unexpected freezing of AYMs in late 2017 after draft AYMs were shared earlier in the year with no indication of a possible freeze, Alberta Municipal Affairs should enact a policy or internal requirement that final AYMs can differ by no more than a set percentage from draft AYMs, to allow municipalities with some assurance when drafting budgets prior to receiving final AYMs.

RMA assigns this resolution a status of **Intent Not Met**, and will work with Alberta Municipal Affairs to develop possible solutions.

Resolution 3-18F

Federal and Provincial Funding of Municipal Broadband Projects

Clearwater County

Carried

- ***Advocacy Target: Service Alberta, Alberta Treasury Board and Finance, Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission, Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada***

WHEREAS the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) deems broadband a “basic” or “essential” service for Canadians; and

WHEREAS the current CRTC targets and federal funding programs do not specifically address the many rural, remote, and northern communities in Canada that continue to be unserved or underserved by internet service providers (ISP); and

WHEREAS broadband service in rural, remote and northern communities is slower, with less capacity (bandwidth) and significantly more cost than services in urban centres; and

WHEREAS connecting to the Government of Alberta’s fibre-optic infrastructure backbone (the SuperNet) is cost-prohibitive to ISPs and municipalities; and

WHEREAS access to high-speed/capacity broadband is vital to municipal sustainability, economic development and diversification, and overall community and social development; and

WHEREAS municipalities across Canada are initiating broadband projects to leverage network-based technologies in order to strategically improve services to rural, remote and northern communities and their residents and businesses, thereby enhancing social capacity, retaining knowledge workers and allowing businesses the opportunity to compete globally;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta request the governments of Alberta and Canada to provide direct funding to municipalities to support rural, remote and northern communities’ development of high speed (50 megabits per second and faster) community broadband, with federal government grants matching municipal and provincial investment in broadband network infrastructure.

Government Response

Service Alberta

In December 2016, the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) declared broadband an essential telecommunications service and set targets for minimum download and upload speeds for 90 per cent of Canadian residents and businesses by 2021. In response to the CRTC decision, Service Alberta began work in 2017 to develop recommendations for a long-term strategy to ensure Albertans have access to high-quality, affordable access to broadband services.

Increases to funding for broadband network support would need to be considered through the government’s budget development process.

Alberta Treasury Board and Finance

Alberta Treasury Board and Finance has no input as the resolution is not within the ministry's mandate.

Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission

In March 2019, the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission provided a letter in response to this resolution. The relevant sections of the letter are as follows:

There are several different ways that municipalities can participate in the Broadband Fund and assist the Commission to distribute funding to underserved areas. First of all, pursuant to point b. of paragraph 119 of Telecom Regulatory Policy 2018-377, municipalities are eligible to apply for funding, so long as they, or any entities that they partner with, fulfill all of the applicant eligibility requirements.

Further, even if a municipality is not a Broadband Fund applicant, it can consult with an applicant regarding a proposed project in their area or can contribute funding toward a proposed project. Both actions would be looked upon favourably by the Commission when assessing a project for potential funding. There could also be other ways for a municipality to support proposed projects in their area without being an applicant for funding.

RMA Reaction and Follow-up

Regarding provincial funding, RMA appreciated the efforts of Service Alberta to develop a long-term strategy for Albertans accessing high speed internet. However, there is not a budget commitment to fund rural broadband.

The response from the CRTC indicates that municipalities are eligible to receive funding from the Broadband Fund if they, or a partner, meet the applicant eligibility requirements. RMA understands that this will allow municipalities who can meet the eligibility requirements on their own will not need to partner with an ISP, in addition to all municipalities having the option to apply for funding if they partner with an experienced ISP.

The Government of Canada has announced their plan to provide high speed internet to all Canadians by 2030. This plan is supported by a proposed budget announcement of \$1.7 billion in new funding, with an additional \$1 billion in financing to be made available from the Canada Infrastructure Bank. While \$750 million was allocated to the Broadband Fund in September 2018, it is not yet known how much, if any, of the new funding will be added to the Broadband Fund. RMA is pleased to see a funding commitment made to provide broadband internet access in rural and remote areas.

This resolution is assigned a status of **Accepted in Part** and will be monitored for additional funding announcements and details of the existing federal budgetary announcement.

Resolution 4-18F

Enabling High-Speed Internet Access for Rural Alberta

MD of Taber

Carried

► **Advocacy Target: Service Alberta**

WHEREAS the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) regulates all Canadian broadcasting and telecommunications activities and enforces rules it creates to carry out the policies assigned to it; and

WHEREAS as per Telecom Regulatory Policy CRTC 2016-496, the CRTC recognizes that a well-developed broadband infrastructure is essential for Canadians to participate in the digital economy and has mandated that Canadians have access to broadband Internet speeds of at least 50 Mbps for downloads and 10 Mbps for uploads, with an unlimited data allowance by 2021; and

WHEREAS the CRTC recognizes that, while most Canadians today have access to CRTC mandated service levels, many rural and remote regions in Canada do not share this access due to a lack of suitable infrastructure; and

WHEREAS the CRTC maintains that a combination of a CRTC funding mechanism, private investments, other government funding, and public-private partnerships will be sufficient to meet its mandated service offerings by the end of 2021; and

WHEREAS Service Alberta plans to deliver a rural broadband strategy that realizes the path forward for all residents of rural Alberta to achieve the CRTC mandated service levels; and

WHEREAS for many rural Albertans, accessing high-speed Internet remains either exceptionally costly, impractical or outright unattainable; and

WHEREAS given the CRTC's and Service Alberta's acknowledgment that access to high-speed Internet access is a crucial factor in economic prosperity, as well as the persistent issues with accessing high-speed broadband service offerings from local internet service providers (ISPs) in rural areas, rural Albertans are justifiably concerned that their welfare and the future economic well-being of their communities is at risk; and

WHEREAS Canada has a competitive disadvantage in deploying infrastructure in comparison to international competitors because of geographical and demographic realities, but still must find efficient means of remaining at the leading edge of infrastructure advances;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) urge the Government of Alberta to deliver a comprehensive rural broadband strategy that realizes the path forward for all residents of rural Alberta to achieve the CRTC's universal service objective targets of 50 Mbps download and 10 Mbps upload for fixed broadband services; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that RMA emphasize to the Government of Alberta that, for economic, political, and social concerns, the completed strategy should be made available to the public in the shortest possible time; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that such a strategy should include the following components to best serve the interests of rural Albertans and to facilitate the effective implementation of the strategy in pursuit of its goals.

- I. That the Government of Alberta should mandate (where legally permissible) and advocate for (where not within the scope of their authority) common carrier/shared access laws to allow for the more efficient deployment of infrastructure.**
- II. That the Government of Alberta should incent partnerships and cooperation between municipalities, the Province, and private industry to develop rural broadband infrastructure, providing matching funds for qualified infrastructure deployments.**
- III. That the Government of Alberta should enable significantly more affordable access to the Supernet for Albertans, through their relationship with Bell Canada, to provide backhaul access for local network solutions.**
- IV. That the strategy should enhance competitive access to the broadband industry in Alberta for more businesses and should promote an increasingly competitive business environment.**

Government Response

Service Alberta

The Government of Alberta (GoA) knows that access to fast, reliable, and affordable broadband is an issue that has been raised by many Albertans. It is important to ensure that appropriate time is taken to consult properly and thoroughly.

Service Alberta (SA) has engaged with representatives from municipalities, Indigenous communities, the small business community, telecommunications companies, internet service providers (ISPs), and others to learn how the future policy can reflect the needs and best interests of people living in Alberta. The first round of engagement on a provincial broadband strategy took place from January 2018 to April 2018, and a second round of engagement began in October 2018 and wrapped up in November 2018.

As part of the stakeholder relationship that SA has with the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission and the federal ministry that regulates telecommunications, Alberta will continue to advocate for provincial telecommunication priorities.

The GOA recognizes that coordination, planning, and funding for all levels of government and with the private sector will be required, and looks forward to unveiling a strategy that will ensure all Albertans have quality, affordable internet access.

SuperNet is not the internet and has never directly provided internet to homes and businesses. Since its beginning in 2001, SuperNet has relied on ISPs to expand their own cables, radios, and towers within a community to meet the need for residential and business internet. As such, wholesale, backhaul, and internet service offerings are not outlined under the public-sector SuperNet 2.0 contracts with

Bell Canada. However, the SuperNet 2.0 contracts do require Bell Canada to ensure wholesale and backhaul services are available for purchase in SuperNet communities. ISPs and interested municipalities may speak to wholesale teams directly by contacting Axia customer service toll-free at 1-866-773-3348.

Axia is now a Bell Canada company reporting directly to that company's management. Axia and Bell have put in place a dedicated municipal contact to address SuperNet service questions: Lisa McDonald, Account Manager, 403-538-4055 or lisa.mcdonald@axia.com.

RMA Reaction and Follow-up

RMA appreciates the consultation on a provincial broadband policy and the Government of Alberta's willingness to advocate to their federal counterparts. However, there is not yet a publicly available provincial broadband strategy or draft.

RMA is pleased with an acknowledgement of wholesale and backhaul services available for purchase in SuperNet communities, however the cost of accessing these services is not addressed in Service Alberta's response.

As a result of a lack of publicly available provincial broadband strategy or draft, this resolution is assigned a status of **Intent Not Met**. As policies change the status of this resolution will be monitored.

Resolution 5-18F

Alberta Energy Regulator Requirements for Acquiring and Holding Energy Licences and Approval

MD of Taber

Carried

► **Advocacy Target: Alberta Energy, Alberta Energy Regulator**

WHEREAS the Alberta Energy Regulator (AER) recently released Bulletin 2017-21, announcing the “New Edition of Directive 067: Eligibility Requirements for Acquiring and Holding Energy Licenses and Approvals”; and

WHEREAS the changes to Directive 067 included requiring additional information at the time of application, increased discretion regarding the rejection of applications where an applicant possesses a risk, and requirements for keeping corporate structure information up to date; and

WHEREAS the changes to Directive 067 did not include any requirements or consideration of the status of municipal property taxes towards an application/transfer of license or liability rating, and the AER continues to transfer licenses of properties that have outstanding property taxes; and

WHEREAS the collection of outstanding oil and gas property taxes continues to a large challenge for many municipalities; and

WHEREAS the *Municipal Government Act* has provisions to collect such debts, but the methods have been largely unsuccessful in practice, and have led to lengthy legal proceedings in an effort to collect such unpaid taxes;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta advocate that the Alberta Energy Regulator (AER) be required to ensure that there are no outstanding municipal property taxes before licenses are transferred, including licensed properties declared as “Orphan Sites”; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that outstanding property taxes form part of the liability rating for oil and gas companies; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that oil and gas companies be required to post deposits in the amount of all outstanding municipal property taxes before they can apply for a license or transfer, and that these deposits are forwarded to the municipality from the AER upon the approval of the license or transfer.

Government Response

Alberta Energy

The Government of Alberta (GoA) adheres to the polluter-pays principle. It is the expectation of Albertans and of this government that industry should continue covering the costs related to cleaning up and decommissioning oil wells and associated infrastructure. The GoA is committed to ensuring the liabilities associated with the full life cycle of energy development are managed appropriately and that Albertans and the environment are protected.

The GoA continues to review the management of historic, current, and future liabilities associated with oil and gas wells and facilities. The Rural Municipalities of Alberta participated in engagement sessions held in summer 2017 as part of the review. This input will be considered in recommendations being developed to improve the liability management system. The Minister of Energy has already publicly indicated that new tools for measuring corporate health will be among the outcomes of the review and we expect further details to be announced in the coming months.

Alberta Energy Regulator

The Alberta Energy Regulator (AER) is committed to protecting what matters to Albertans—public safety and the environment—all while ensuring the rules are followed at every stage of development. In December 2017, the AER updated *Directive 067: Eligibility Requirements for Acquiring and Holding Energy Licences and Approvals*. Under Directive 067, energy operators must disclose financial information to the AER including audited financial statements and the existence of insolvency proceedings.

The AER does not verify that municipal taxes have been paid by energy operators before approving license transfers. We do not currently have jurisdiction to impose conditions on license transfers relating to unpaid municipal taxes. However, we have been working with Alberta Municipal Affairs on how municipalities can recover unpaid taxes from oil and gas operators. As part of the working group, we provided information on our requirements for oil and gas operators to transfer licenses for wells, facilities, pipelines, and other energy infrastructure.

Applications for energy development, including license transfers, are posted to the AER's Public Notice of Application tool on aer.ca for 30 days. During this time, Albertans (including municipalities) who believe that they are directly and adversely affected by a proposed application or license transfer can file a statement of concern with the AER. We review all statements of concern and consider these concerns when making decisions on applications.

Developing Alberta's energy resources comes with a responsibility to restore the land to a state similar to before development took place. Our Licensee Liability Rating (LLR) program is one of many AER programs that are intended to ensure that energy operators—not Albertans—are held responsible for cleaning up energy infrastructure and their associated sites. The LLR program calculates a monthly ratio for each licensee (i.e. energy operator) based on their deemed assets (production) and liabilities (estimated abandonment and reclamation costs). This is known as the Liability Management Rating (LMR).

To improve their LMR, energy operators can reclaim or sell less-productive assets, increase their assets (by optimizing production or purchasing highly productive sites), or post security (by way of cash or letter of credit) with the AER. Unpaid municipal taxes do not form part of a company's LMR.

The AER allows license transfers if:

- the licensee already has and will continue to have an LMR of 2.0 or higher after the acquisition,
- the acquisition will improve their LMR to 2.0 or higher, or
- they are able to satisfy the AER that they will be able to meet their obligations throughout the life cycle of energy development despite an LMR of less than 2.0.

RMA Reaction and Follow-up

The Government of Alberta response indicates that although many factors are considered during the process of reviewing and approving a license transfer and within the AER's liability management rating (LMR), payment of municipal property taxes is not among them. RMA appreciates that Alberta Energy is working to improve the LMR and overall liability management system and is considering input from RMA and Alberta Municipal Affairs related to the extent to which outstanding municipal taxes should be considered part of a company's LMR. However, as rural municipalities are faced with mounting unpaid taxes related to oil and gas infrastructure, this issue must be addressed urgently.

RMA is also concerned with AER's comments that imposing conditions on license transfers due to unpaid municipal taxes is beyond their jurisdiction, while also encouraging municipalities to intervene in the transfer approval process due to unpaid taxes. Based on the response, it is unclear what purpose this would serve, as it appears that AER could not alter the transfer approval process due to unpaid municipal taxes.

According to a 2019 RMA survey, rural municipalities are currently facing a deficit of between \$81 million and \$96 million in unpaid property taxes from the oil and gas industry. Based on the Government of Alberta response, there are no current provisions available in the transfer approval and liability management systems to address unpaid municipal taxes, and limited interest in expanding either process to do so. Given that lack of payment of municipal taxes is often a sign of financial distress for companies, and may lead to further abandonment of other commitments, RMA urges the Government of Alberta to include this within the scope of the AER (as they are the primary oversight body for oil and gas operations in the province).

This resolution is assigned a status of **Intent Not Met**, and RMA will continue to advocate on this issue.

Resolution 6-18F

Securing Municipal Property Taxes in the Event of Bankruptcy or Insolvency

MD of Opportunity

Carried

► **Advocacy Target: Alberta Municipal Affairs, Alberta Energy, Alberta Energy Regulator**

WHEREAS the *Municipal Government Act* (MGA) requires municipalities to collect an Education Property Tax from property owners on behalf of the Government of Alberta and submit that amount regardless of whether the municipality is able to collect these taxes from property owners; and

WHEREAS this requirement has resulted in financial challenges for many municipalities throughout the province; and

WHEREAS across rural Alberta, a significant amount of unpaid requisitions are owed by several taxpayers that were in insolvency or receivership in respect to outstanding taxes including linear taxes; and

WHEREAS in a recent case, a court considered the municipality as an unsecured creditor when a court application was made to determine how the court-appointed receiver should distribute the proceeds from the sale of the taxpayer's assets; and

WHEREAS Section 348 of the MGA stipulates that property taxes, local improvement taxes, business taxes or community revitalization levies take priority over the claims of every person except the Crown; and

WHEREAS the Court's directive it very unlikely that a municipality will receive any payment in respect to the outstanding taxes under the current order as the proceeds of the sale are less than the total amount of all the secured claims; and

WHEREAS the issue of whether taxes including linear property taxes constitute a secured claim, in priority to other secured claims such as banks' claims, has not been fully resolved; and

WHEREAS even if an appeal of the Court's earlier decision in this matter is unsuccessful, such a negative result would provide a significant basis to lobby the Government of Alberta to make necessary legislative amendments to re-assert the secured status of taxes owed to the municipality;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta partner with Alberta Urban Municipalities Association to advocate to the Government of Alberta to amend section 348 and other relevant sections of the *Municipal Government Act* to ensure that municipal property taxes are legally assured a status as a secured claim in the event that the property owner enters bankruptcy or receivership.

Government Response

Alberta Municipal Affairs

The *Municipal Government Act* (MGA) provides the framework within which taxes may be collected. With regard to the collection of taxes not related to land, including linear property tax arrears, the Act enables a municipality to recover arrears through a seizure process. The amount that can be seized by a

municipality in order to recover linear property tax arrears; however, is limited. Under the *MGA*, Part 10, Division 9, Tax Recovery Not Related to Land provides a municipality the authority to seize property in order to collect property taxes that are in arrears. Alberta Municipal Affairs will review and consider options to address issues related to linear property tax collection in the event of bankruptcy or insolvency, particularly in light of recent legal rulings.

The province has taken several additional measures to help alleviate some of the burden on municipalities. This includes the Provincial Education Requisition Credit (PERC) Program for uncollectable education property taxes on oil and gas properties was introduced in 2017. This program provides municipalities with an education property tax credit equal to the uncollectable education property taxes on delinquent oil and gas properties, upon approval of a qualifying application. Applicants may claim delinquent taxes back to the 2015 tax year. The deadline for this year's intake was January 15, 2019, with the final PERC application deadline for consideration of uncollectable education taxes for the 2015-19 tax years being January 15, 2020. In 2018, \$3 million in education tax credits were provided to 37 municipalities. While PERC provides relief for the education tax portion of uncollectable taxes, municipalities still need to absorb the loss from uncollectable municipal taxes on delinquent oil and gas properties.

The province has also changed the Alberta Linear Property Assessment Minister's Guidelines to allow the assessment of linear property owned by defunct companies to be reduced to \$0. This eliminates the requirement for municipalities to tax and collect property tax, including the provincial education tax, on these types of properties.

Alberta Energy

Alberta Energy looks forward to hearing from the RMA and the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association on this issue, once the proposed partnership between the two organizations is solidified.

Alberta Energy Regulator

Please see the input provided by the Alberta Energy Regulator for Resolution 5-18F.

RMA Reaction and Follow-up

RMA appreciates the recent actions taken by the Government of Canada to alleviate the ongoing challenges that rural municipalities are facing regarding the collection of unpaid property taxes on linear properties. However, both the Provincial Education Requisition Credit (PERC) Program and allowing municipalities to place a \$0 assessment on linear properties owned by defunct companies are relatively small measures that attempt to alleviate the negative impacts that an unclear tax recovery regime has on rural municipalities.

Unlike the alleviation measures identified above, the resolution calls for fundamental changes to section 348 of the *Municipal Government Act* to clarify the tax recovery powers of municipalities for taxes not related to land, including linear property. As the outcome of current legal proceedings involving three RMA members will inform whether section 348 currently provides municipalities with adequate tax recovery powers on linear property.

As the Government of Alberta is currently unwilling to revisit section 348, this resolution is assigned a status of **Intent Not Met**, and RMA will continue to advocate on this issue moving forward.

Resolution 7-18F

Municipal and Privately-Owned Protected Areas Inventory

Mackenzie County

Carried

► **Advocacy Target: Alberta Environment and Parks**

WHEREAS in 2010, the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) adopted the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity, which included 20 global biodiversity goals, known as the Aichi Targets; and

WHEREAS in response to the Aichi Targets, Canada adopted a suite of national targets, known as the 2020 Biodiversity Goals and Targets for Canada; and

WHEREAS Canada and Alberta's co-led Pathway to Canada Target 1 project focuses on the protection of 17% of terrestrial areas and inland waters and 10% of coastal and marine areas across Canada; and

WHEREAS Alberta Environment and Parks has also committed to achieving the protection of 17% of terrestrial areas and inland waters within Alberta by 2020; and

WHEREAS at the end of 2016, the Government of Canada recognized that 10.5% of terrestrial areas and inland waters, and 0.96% of coastal and marine areas were protected; and

WHEREAS in June 2018, Alberta Environment and Parks recognized that 12.54% of Alberta is protected, through 8.24% federally and 4.3% provincially protected areas; and

WHEREAS the International Union for Conservation of Nature recommends that all privately-owned protected areas that satisfy all international standards should be recognized as protected areas by all levels of government; and

WHEREAS the Municipal Government Act provides municipalities with land-use planning tools, such as environmental reserves, to permanently protect parcels of land to conserve natural features including: natural drainage courses, flood plains, waterbodies, and riparian areas from future development; and

WHEREAS Alberta Environment and Parks has yet to announce that municipal and privately-owned protected areas would be recognized in their assessment to achieve their target of 17% terrestrial areas and inland waters protection;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) urge the Government of Alberta to recognize municipal and privately-owned protected areas in their reporting towards Alberta's 17% protection of terrestrial areas and inland waters target if they satisfy international standards for protected areas or Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs); and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that the RMA partner with the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association to compile an inventory of all municipal and privately-owned protected areas in Alberta, for the purpose of providing Alberta Environment and Parks with a complete inventory of candidate protected areas and OECMs, for their 2020 17% terrestrial areas and inland waters protection target.

Government Response

Alberta Environment and Parks

Municipal and privately owned protected areas play an important role in the network of areas in Alberta dedicated to biodiversity conservation. Although small, these areas provide a host of functional biodiversity benefits and are often located in areas of significance for connectivity, ecosystem services, biodiversity and species at risk.

Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP) is committed to working with partners to ensure that existing and new protected or conserved areas are inventoried and recognized for their contributions to biodiversity conservation in Alberta, and that the eligibility and reporting criteria are clear and accessible for all land managers.

AEP is exploring opportunities to work with municipal partners to understand how municipal tools under the *Municipal Government Act*, like conservation and environmental reserves—coupled with policy and regulations—can enable the long-term protection of biodiversity. The resolution to inventory municipally protected or conserved areas is an excellent step forward in beginning to recognize the potential contributions of the large numbers and wide diversity of municipal and private lands to conservation in Alberta.

RMA Reaction and Follow-up

RMA is encouraged by the Government of Alberta's recognition of the ecological and biodiversity benefits of municipal and privately-owned protected areas. RMA has been in contact with the Alberta Land Stewardship Centre which has an existing inventory of privately held conservation areas. This inventory does not include municipally held land which would be required to fulfill the intent of the resolution and may require significant RMA resources. RMA is considering how to proceed on this resolution, and the extent to which RMA members could be involved in the process, but the current status is **Intent Not Met**.

Resolution 8-18F

Restricting the Consumption of Cannabis based on Regulations for Liquor Consumption

Thorhild County

Carried

► **Advocacy Target: Alberta Justice and Solicitor General, Alberta Gaming, Liquor and Cannabis Commission**

WHEREAS Bill 26, An Act to Control and Regulate Cannabis, received Royal Assent on December 15, 2017; and

WHEREAS Bill 26 has amended the Gaming and Liquor Act to the Gaming, Liquor and Cannabis Act; and

WHEREAS Bill 26, Section 90.28 states “no person may smoke or vape cannabis in any area or place where that person is prohibited from smoking under the Tobacco and Smoking Reduction Act or any other Act or the bylaws of a municipality”; and

WHEREAS secondhand cannabis smoke can harm nonusers; and

WHEREAS consumption of cannabis will have similar effects as consumption of alcohol; and

WHEREAS the consumption of cannabis should be prohibited in areas frequented by the general public and especially by children; and

WHEREAS Alberta Health Services recommends that municipalities implement regulations banning consumption in public places, as well as for public intoxication; and

WHEREAS the Government of Canada has implemented an advertisement slogan (“#don't drive high”) which amplifies the issue of the consumption of cannabis while driving;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta request that the Government of Alberta amend Section 90.28 (a) of An Act to Control and Regulate Cannabis to reflect that no person may smoke or vape cannabis in any area or place where that person is prohibited from consuming liquor under the Gaming, Liquor and Cannabis Act or any other Act or the bylaws of a municipality.

Government Response

Alberta Treasury Board and Finance

While alcohol can be lawfully consumed in licensed establishments, no such premises exists for cannabis use, given the increased public health risks associated with smoking or vaping indoors.

By providing some open-air public spaces where cannabis can be lawfully used, the province can mitigate the health risks associated with indoor use. It should also be noted that municipalities have the right to augment provincial public use rules with their own bylaws, including bans against public use.

Alberta Justice and Solicitor General

Alberta Justice and Solicitor General has no input, as the resolution is no longer within the ministry’s mandate. In July 2018, Alberta Treasury Board and Finance assumed the lead role on the cannabis file for the Government of Alberta.

RMA Reaction and Follow-up

RMA understands that public consumption challenges differ between cannabis and alcohol due to the different ways the substances are consumed. However, several provinces and territories in Canada have chosen to prohibit public consumption of cannabis. RMA encourages Alberta to review the public health and enforcement impacts of its current public consumption allowances and compare them with impacts in jurisdictions that prohibit public consumption periodically.

This resolution is assigned a status of **Intent Not Met**, and RMA will continue to advocate on this issue.

Resolution 9-18F

Impact of the Alberta Wetland Policy on the Cost of Maintaining Public Road Infrastructure

Wheatland County

Carried

► **Advocacy Target: Alberta Environment and Parks**

WHEREAS the Alberta Wetland Policy and the Water Act require costly environmental studies as a component of the application process for wetland impacts; and

WHEREAS the Alberta Wetland Policy and the Water Act require wetland replacement for impacts to all wetlands greater in permanence than ephemeral; and

WHEREAS rural municipalities are not currently in a position to perform permittee-based wetland replacement, and therefore must pay in-lieu compensation where road maintenance activities on existing roads impact applicable wetlands; and

WHEREAS rural municipalities manage the majority of Alberta's public road infrastructure; and

WHEREAS roads require consistent maintenance and/or re-building to support a growing province, in order to ensure public safety, accommodate increased use including extra weight and more traffic, and to upgrade roads to current standards; and

WHEREAS municipal roads requiring maintenance occur in existing right of ways, and were historically planned and built prior to the requirements of provincial wetland regulations; and

WHEREAS the re-building and maintenance of roads are causing municipalities increasing financial burden due to the requirement for environmental studies and compensation payments associated with the Alberta Wetland Policy; and

WHEREAS municipalities have limited opportunity to generate revenue to accommodate the increasing cost of re-building and maintaining roads except to transfer the costs to local ratepayers; and

WHEREAS the consequences of not completing road maintenance as required could include putting public safety in jeopardy due to a lack of upgraded roads, and loss of transportation routes for industry and the public due to road bans or road closure;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta urge the Government of Alberta to modify the Alberta Wetland Mitigation Directive to allow all wetland impacts as a result of municipal road maintenance or re-building of existing roads to utilize a one to one ratio, or D to D value wetland replacement; and/or consider exempting all wetland impacts in road right of ways that are smaller than one hectare in size.

Government Response

Alberta Environment and Parks

Wetlands play a critical role in sustaining healthy watersheds. They protect water quality, provide water storage, recharge groundwater and support biodiversity by offering habitat for wildlife, fish and plants.

Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP) is committed to the improvement of the provincial wetland management system through regular interactions with stakeholders, including the Rural Municipalities of Alberta and other municipal partners.

The Wetland Assessment and Impact Form was created in 2017 to meet wetland policy requirements, while significantly reducing the costs of wetland assessment studies for low-risk activities such as road upgrade and widening projects.

The new Wetland Replacement Dedicated Revenue Initiative supports a fully developed, integrated wetland management system, as recommended by the Auditor General of Alberta, and promotes greater municipal involvement in wetland restoration decisions throughout the province.

AEP will continue to engage with municipal stakeholders to ensure that wetland policy requirements are accessible, consistent and efficient, while remaining aligned with legislative and regulatory obligations.

RMA Reaction and Follow-up

While RMA appreciates the initiatives identified in the Government of Alberta response intended to reduce wetland assessment study costs and better integrate wetland management systems, the resolution specifically requests policy changes to reduce municipal wetland restoration costs related to road maintenance or construction through the use of a one-to-one replacement ratio or exemption of wetland impacts in road right of ways smaller than one hectare in size. The Government of Alberta response does not address either of these requests, therefore this resolution is assigned a status of **Intent Not Met**.

Resolution 10-18F

Community Peace Officer Access to the Canadian Police Information Centre

Mountain View County

Carried

► **Advocacy Target: Alberta Justice and Solicitor General, Royal Canadian Mounted Police**

WHEREAS rural municipalities employ Community Peace Officers (CPO) (Level 1 and Level 2) under the *Peace Officer Act*; and

WHEREAS rural municipalities are responsible for ensuring the safety of CPOs; and

WHEREAS Canadian Police Information Centre (CPIC) access was made available to CPO Level 1 in 2013; and

WHEREAS CPIC access is not available to CPO Level 2; and

WHEREAS uptake and usage of CPIC is available to CPOs only after initial contact and approach of a subject; and

WHEREAS employers are responsible for drafting policy that prohibits a CPO from attending a location alone where there is a known threat and must maintain a list of known local threats for reference by dispatchers and CPOs;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta request that Alberta Justice and Solicitor General work with the Canadian Police Information Centre, and any other Ministry necessary, to provide direct, mobile and timely Canadian Police Information Centre access to Community Peace Officers that can be used as a proactive and preventative tool within defined guidelines.

Government Response

Alberta Justice and Solicitor General

The Peace Officer Program has been working with external stakeholders since 2011 to ensure that community peace officers continue to have access to information contained on the Canadian Police Information Centre (CPIC), in order to ensure that they have the appropriate tools to conduct their duties effectively and safely.

In July 2018, the Director of Policing Standards and Audits met with representatives from the Sheriffs Branch, the Sheriffs Operations Control Centre, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), and the Alberta Association of Community Peace Officers (AACPO) to discuss more timely access to CPIC information.

The outcome of this meeting was as follows:

- The Sheriffs Operations Control Centre has committed to ensuring a five-minute processing time for CPIC information is the norm and not the exception.
- The Peace Officer Program, Sheriffs Branch and the Sheriffs Operations Control Centre, have committed to initializing a project that would enable CPIC access through in-car laptops to all peace officers that are eligible to receive CPIC information (community peace officer Level 1,

sheriffs, fish and wildlife enforcement officers, conservation officers, and commercial vehicle enforcement officers).

- CPIC Ottawa is aware of this project and are supportive as we move forward through the initial phases.

Please note that the Peace Officer Program is in constant contact with the president of the AACPO and updates are provided as they pertain to CPIC and all other aspects of the program as needed or requested.

RMA Reaction and Follow-up

The Government of Alberta response indicates an ongoing collaborative effort between the Alberta Justice and Solicitor General and other organizations to ensure that community peace officers (CPOs) have adequate access to Canadian Police Information Centre (CPIC). The short-term commitment of five-minute processing time through Sheriffs Operations Control Centres and the long-term commitment enabling direct access through in-car laptops to eligible CPIC officers is encouraging.

In addition to the resolution response, RMA has learned that Alberta Justice and Solicitor General, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and the Alberta Association of Community Peace Officers have jointly requested that CPO access to CPIC be facilitated through the Provincial Radio Control Centre, which is under the jurisdiction of Service Alberta. RMA has formally supported this request.

This resolution is assigned a status of **Accepted in Principle** and will be updated when direct CPO access to CPIC commences.

Resolution 11-18F

Rural Municipalities of Alberta Represents Municipalities on Water Act Approvals

Rocky View County

Carried

► **Advocacy Target: Alberta Environment and Parks**

WHEREAS municipalities share the Government of Alberta's objective of serving the public good through proper implementation of the *Water Act*; and

WHEREAS rural municipalities constitute the largest land base in Alberta, and therefore have multiple interactions with Alberta Environment and Parks as they seek *Water Act* approvals as part of the process to improve infrastructure in their municipalities; and

WHEREAS improving the *Water Act* approval process will ensure that public dollars are more efficiently applied to the protection and stewardship of water systems in the province while balancing the need for critical upgrades to infrastructure; and

WHEREAS Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) members have previously submitted resolutions requesting Alberta Environment and Parks to reduce the approval timelines associated with *Water Act* approvals; and

WHEREAS at the Spring 2018 RMA convention, the Minister of Environment and Parks discussed the ongoing review of the *Water Act* approval process;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta work with Alberta Environment and Parks to provide the rural perspective and input related to streamlining and improving the *Water Act* approval process.

Government Response

Alberta Environment and Parks

Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP) recognizes the value of the unique rural perspective that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) has regarding the *Water Act* approval process and water management in general.

AEP has developed the Environmental Approvals Plan, which will reduce approval times for regulated activities that require approvals through legislation, such as the *Water Act*, the *Public Lands Act* and the *Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act*.

AEP will be introducing system enhancements and a one-window framework that will be effective, efficient and client-focused through a web-based application platform. This plan will be rolled out over three years. AEP welcomes the opportunity to work more closely with the RMA.

RMA Reaction and Follow-up

The Government of Alberta response indicates that Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP) is in the process of enhancing the *Water Act* approval system to reduce approval times for activities regulated under the *Water Act*.

The response also indicates that although RMA was not engaged in the development of any of these improvements, AEP is open to working more closely with RMA moving forward, although it is not clear in what capacity. RMA appreciates this offer, although this resolution is currently assigned a status of **Intent Not Met** and will be updated based on future collaboration between AER and RMA on addressing *Water Act* approvals.

Resolution 12-18F

Multi-Stakeholder Committee to Work at Reducing the Use of Potable Water by the Oil and Gas Industry in Alberta

Brazeau County

Carried

► **Advocacy Target: Alberta Energy**

WHEREAS there is a concern about the enormous waste of fresh water by the oil and gas industry through hydro-fracking and water injection processes; and

WHEREAS injection of 32 million cubic meters (the current total of licenses held by the oil and gas industry in Alberta) of fresh water is permanently removed from the aquatic cycle; and

WHEREAS free and easy access to fresh water for enhanced oil recovery acts as a disincentive for oil and gas companies to pursue alternate methods such as carbon dioxide injection, light oil hydrofracking or to drill deeper to locate and pipe non-potable water for injection purposes; and

WHEREAS rural municipalities are concerned with the amount of potable water used in the fracking and water injection process;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta request the Government of Alberta to immediately strike a multi-stakeholder committee to work at reducing the use of potable water and explore alternate options for use by the oil and gas industry in Alberta.

Government Response

Alberta Environment and Parks

The Government of Alberta is committed to developing its unconventional energy resources in a safe and responsible manner. There are strict rules in place to protect Alberta's aquatic ecosystems, one of the province's most important resources.

Water use is regulated under the *Water Act*. Where, when and how much water can be withdrawn is regulated. Diversion licenses are granted to applicants when sufficient water is available to meet both ecosystem requirements and the rights of existing license holders. The 2006 Water Conservation and Allocation Policy for Oilfield Injection requires operators to assess alternatives to fresh water prior to applying for a water license for enhanced oil recovery (water floods) and in-situ operations. Significant water productivity improvements have been made under this policy.

The government is reviewing the current approach to water licensing for oil and gas operations in Alberta, including the hydraulic fracturing sector that has emerged in recent years. In February 2018, Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP) issued the Directive for Water Licensing of Hydraulic Fracturing Projects— Area of Use Approach (the Directive), to provide direction to the Alberta Energy Regulator (AER) to ensure a consistent approach in evaluating the various factors regarding water licensing of hydraulic fracturing projects with multi-year operations.

The Directive enables better cumulative effects management of water resources, and has stringent requirements for demonstrating the need for water and monitoring and reporting water use. The Directive also requires oil and gas operators to conduct an assessment of alternatives to fresh water,

such as saline groundwater, recycled municipal or industrial wastewater, recycled flowback and non-water technologies, prior to applying for a license to use fresh water.

The AER is responsible for issuing water licenses for energy development activities on behalf of the government. All non-saline water use is reported to the AER through various requirements:

- Directive 081: Water Disposal Limits and Reporting Requirements for Thermal In Situ Oil Sands Schemes
- Directive 059: Well Drilling and Completion Data Filing Requirements
- Directive 007: Volumetric and Infrastructure Requirements
- The Water Act

The AER publishes an Alberta Energy Industry Water Use Report each year, which shows how much water is allocated and used to recover oil, gas, and oil sands resources through oil sands mining, in situ, enhanced oil recovery, and hydraulic fracturing. The report contains information on non-saline water use, water recycling rates, use of alternatives to non-saline water, and the volume of non-saline water required to produce a barrel of oil equivalent.

Generally, companies are using less water than what is allocated to them. In 2016, approximately 10 billion cubic metres of non-saline water were allocated for use in Alberta. Approximately 10 per cent (or one billion cubic metres) of that was allocated to energy development. The remaining 90 per cent went to other uses, such as agriculture, forestry, commercial (for example, golf courses, gravel pit operations), and municipalities. Of the total water allocated to the energy industry, companies used less than a quarter of their allocation.

The energy industry has made significant efforts to use water more efficiently and reduce its impact on the environment. On average, the industry recycles approximately 80 per cent of the non-saline water it uses. On average, industry used 35 per cent less non-saline water to produce one barrel per oil equivalent in 2016, compared to 2012. The report is part of the Industry Performance Program, which measures, evaluates, and reports on the energy development activities that the AER regulates.

Alberta Energy

Alberta Energy has no further input beyond the response from AEP.

RMA Reaction and Follow-up

The Government of Alberta response provides a detailed overview of current water use by the oil and gas industry, as well as current legislation, policies and initiatives in place to conserve water usage and reclaim water used by industry. While this information is encouraging, it does not address the intent of the resolution to form a committee and the larger underlying fact that RMA members believe more can be done to reduce industrial water use.

RMA assigns this resolution a status of **Intent Not Met**, and will continue to advocate for the formation of a committee on this issue.

Resolution 13-18F

TELUS Failure to Maintain Landline Operations

MD of Spirit River

Carried

► **Advocacy Target: Service Alberta, Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission**

WHEREAS TELUS has owned the monopoly outright on the landline system since 1991 which has been and continues to be a vital link for communication including the 911 system across Alberta; and

WHEREAS wireless connectivity has been declared a necessary utility yet many Albertan's still do not have access to secure and stable wireless connectivity and rely on a landline system for communication and internet; and

WHEREAS the lack of investment in maintenance of landline infrastructure creates the perception that wireless is TELUS' preferred option;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) request that Service Alberta direct TELUS to maintain their complete landline network until such time that there are assurances that the wireless system is as secure, economical and stable as the previous landline system has been; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that RMA request that the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) review the original agreement with TELUS to ensure they are meeting their responsibilities.

Government Response

Service Alberta

Telecommunications companies, including major telephone companies, fall under the jurisdiction of the federal Ministry of Innovation, Science and Economic Development and are regulated by the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission. As such, Service Alberta (SA) and the Government of Alberta are unable to put requirements on telecommunications companies in Alberta.

As part of the ongoing stakeholder relationship with TELUS, SA will discuss the maintenance of the landline network with TELUS.

RMA Reaction and Follow-up

RMA has not yet received a response to this resolution from the CRTC.

RMA appreciates the response from Service Alberta and their offer to discuss maintenance of the landline network with TELUS. RMA will contact ISED regarding this issue.

RMA assigns this resolution a status of **Incomplete Information** and will continue to advocate on this issue.

Resolution 14-18F

Reclamation of Non-Producing Oil and Gas Sites on Agricultural Lands Owned by Bankrupt Companies

Lac La Biche County

Carried

► **Advocacy Target: Alberta Energy Regulator, Alberta Energy**

WHEREAS many oil and gas production companies have declared bankruptcy in the last several years; and

WHEREAS many of the wells, compressor stations, battery and satellite sites and facilities owned by these bankrupt companies have been abandoned and not reclaimed; and

WHEREAS many of these properties are located on agricultural land and hinder the regular field operations of livestock and crop producers; and

WHEREAS the mandate of the Orphan Well Association is to manage and reclaim properties abandoned by bankrupt oil and gas companies; and

WHEREAS the activities of Orphan Well Association are limited by the funds available and therefore cannot currently reclaim all of these properties in a timely fashion;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta request that the Orphan Well Association prioritize the reclamation of abandoned oil and gas sites on the following basis:

1. **Health, safety and environmental needs**
2. **Agricultural land**
3. **All other lands**

Government Response

Alberta Energy Regulator

The Alberta Energy Regulator may designate the wells, facilities, and pipelines of a bankrupt company, where there are no responsible working interest participants, as orphans. When this happens, the Orphan Well Association (OWA), an industry-funded not-for-profit organization, manages the orphaned infrastructure.

Questions about the prioritization process to decommission and reclaim orphaned energy infrastructure based on public safety and the environment should be directed to the OWA. Similarly, the OWA also has the authority to select contractors.

Alberta Energy

Alberta Energy is currently administering a loan to the Orphan Well Association (OWA). We understand that their assessment of decommissioning and reclamation work is based on science and on-the-ground experience. Public safety and environmental protection is their top priority. Inspections are an important activity that ensures protection of public safety and the environment and inspection results support the OWA's risk assessment with higher risk sites being prioritized.

RMA Reaction and Follow-up

The response by the Government of Alberta indicates that public safety and environmental protection are priorities in the reclamation of oil and gas wells, although the actual prioritization process is completed by the Orphan Well Association (OWA), which has not yet provided a response to the resolution. A status of **Incomplete Information** has been assigned to this issue until a response from the OWA has been received.

Resolution 15-18F

Wetland Mitigation Directive – Restoration and Compensation

Red Deer County

Carried

► **Advocacy Target: Alberta Environment and Parks**

WHEREAS the Alberta Wetland Policy provides the strategic direction and tools required to make informed management decisions in the long-term interest of Albertans; and

WHEREAS the Alberta Wetland Policy is intended to minimize the loss and degradation of wetlands, while allowing for continued growth and economic development in the province; and

WHEREAS the Alberta Wetland Mitigation Directive is the policy implementation tool that is intended to promote the avoidance of removal of wetlands and describes the minimization plan, replacement plan and permittee-responsible replacement project requirements where avoidance is not possible; and

WHEREAS section five of the Wetland Mitigation Directive states that applicants can fulfill their replacement obligations through purchase of credits from a third-party wetland bank, making a payment to the in-lieu fee program, or undertaking permittee-responsible replacement; and

WHEREAS the Wetland and Water Boundary Unit of Alberta Environment and Parks has stated that permittee-responsible replacement in the form of enhanced wetlands or constructed wetlands will not be allowed until an enhancement directive or a construction directive to allow for wetland construction is prepared; and

WHEREAS the construction directive has been referenced since June 2017 and no timeline has been given for its adoption;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta request that Alberta Environment and Parks follow the Wetland Mitigation Directive and that permittee-responsible mitigation either through enhancement or construction of wetlands be allowed, be it either through the Alternative Land Use Services program or through wetlands constructed as a part of stormwater management ponds.

Government Response

Alberta Environment and Parks

Wetlands play a critical role in sustaining healthy watersheds. They protect water quality, provide water storage, recharge groundwater and support biodiversity by offering habitat for wildlife, fish and plants.

The new Wetland Replacement Dedicated Revenue Initiative supports a fully developed, integrated wetland management system, as recommended by the Office of the Auditor General, and promotes greater municipal involvement in wetland restoration decisions throughout the province. Once implemented, the new draft Wetland Construction Directive and Guide will allow municipalities and developers to apply wetlands constructed as part of stormwater management systems toward their wetland replacement obligations.

Alberta Environment and Parks will continue to engage with key stakeholders to ensure that wetland policy requirements are accessible, consistent and efficient, while remaining aligned with legislative and regulatory obligations.

RMA Reaction and Follow-up

Changes to the management of wetland replacement in Alberta allow for greater flexibility in how municipalities can work locally to replace disturbed wetlands. The response by the Government of Alberta indicates that a future Wetlands Construction Directive and Guide will allow municipalities to apply wetlands constructed as part of a stormwater management system as part of their wetland replacement obligations.

Given the tentative direction provided by the Government of Alberta, the RMA assigns this resolution a status of **Accepted in Principle**, and will continue to monitor the draft Wetlands Construction Directive and Guide for completeness.

Resolution 16-18F

Demand Meters and Rate Riders

Brazeau County

Carried

► ***Advocacy Target: Alberta Energy, Alberta Utilities Commission***

WHEREAS municipal government buildings and recreational facilities are to benefit the people of Alberta; and

WHEREAS demand meters are the currently accepted practice of tracking peak demand and electrical usage; and

WHEREAS there has been a significant recent rise in electrical rates either by distribution and/or transmission charges and/or electric rates and/or carbon surcharges; and

WHEREAS demand meters are reset on an annual basis; and

WHEREAS when a system requiring electricity is connected to the grid and a peak demand is established, the premises is then billed on that peak for the next consecutive twelve-month period;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta request that the Alberta Utilities Commission create a separate rate class for municipal buildings and recreational facilities and require that all demand meters are reset and billed accordingly on a monthly basis.

Government Response

Alberta Utilities Commission

Regulated utilities must apply to the Alberta Utilities Commission (AUC) for approval of their future operating and capital costs. Once approved, these costs are recovered from rates charged to their respective customers in their approved tariffs. Utilities' applications are considered in a fair and open regulatory process—formal proceedings in the form of extensive, evidence based public hearings which bring the utilities and other interested parties before the AUC.

In the near future there will be relevant proceedings for the Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) to participate in and to advocate their position. The AUC expects all distribution utilities to file Phase II rate design applications in 2019, which are the best proceedings for a participant such as the RMA to make the case for the establishment of new rate classes or changes to rate designs (e.g., moving away from demand-based charges).

Please note that the timing of the above-noted applications, as well as the extent of issues addressed in the applications, may be affected by the recently initiated AUC Electric System Distribution Inquiry. The RMA should follow the AUC's communications on this inquiry (Proceeding 24116) to remain informed about when the Phase II applications will be filed.

The RMA should also register in the Electric System Distribution Inquiry. The Commission has asked for comments from registered parties on the scope and timing for the inquiry. As part of this, the distribution utilities will provide input on whether the upcoming Phase II proceedings should still be filed on their originally-scheduled timelines, or whether those applications should be held off until after the inquiry

has concluded. The AUC will need to provide guidance on these matters as part of its process-related communications for the inquiry.

The purpose of the Electric System Distribution Inquiry is to map out the key issues related to the future of the electric distribution grid, to aid in developing the necessary regulatory framework to accommodate the evolution of the electric system. The evolving nature of electric generation, consumption, storage and the system in general has significant implications for the grid, incumbent utilities, consumers, grid managers and the regulatory framework. These are among the central matters the AUC will examine in its distribution inquiry.

The changing energy system raises fundamental questions about traditional planning approaches, rate structures, cost-recovery mechanisms, incentives and the evaluation of prudent utility costs. A key issue for the AUC in the Electric System Distribution Inquiry is whether the current approach to rates and rate design needs to be re-evaluated.

The Commission has already invited interested parties to provide comments on the matters the Commission intends to examine in this inquiry, details of which are provided on the AUC website. Some municipalities have registered. The AUC was in contact with RMA by phone on January 9, 2019, and covered three points:

- The RMA can track and participate in Phase II rate design proceedings to advocate their position.
- The RMA can track the Electric System Distribution Inquiry to further track how the inquiry might influence the timing of Phase II applications.
- The RMA should immediately file a statement of intention to participate in the AUC's major Electric System Distribution Inquiry and provide input into matters to be considered in the inquiry.

Alberta Energy

Alberta Energy (AE) is not involved with the independent regulatory decisions of the AUC, which includes its rate setting power. A change of rate classification or new rate class would require consultation between the AUC, each distribution service provider, and consumer groups during a formal hearing. AE is currently in the early stages of a distribution policy review in which rate classification changes may be a consideration. Any recommendations would require to be approved by the AUC and structured within each distribution service provider's rates to ensure they are just and reasonable to consumers.

RMA Reaction and Follow-up

Based on this resolution, the RMA was contacted about participating Electric System Distribution Inquiry and the RMA has submitted their intention to provide input during this process. Currently, the RMA is awaiting additional information regarding phase II proceedings and will bring the intent of this resolution forward at this time. This resolution is assigned a status of **Intent Not Met**.

Resolution 17-18F

Alberta Environment and Parks Additional Resources for Water Act Approvals

Brazeau County

Carried

► **Advocacy Target: Alberta Environment and Parks**

WHEREAS municipalities share the Government of Alberta's objective of serving the public good through proper implementation of the *Water Act*; and

WHEREAS the current timeline for *Water Act* approvals through Alberta Environment and Parks poses significant financial, environmental, and social challenges for all municipalities; and

WHEREAS improving the *Water Act* approval process will ensure public dollars are efficiently applied to the protection and stewardship of water systems in Alberta while balancing the need for critical upgrades to public infrastructure; and

WHEREAS Alberta Environment and Parks is undertaking a process and systems review to improve its approval times with constrained financial resources;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta request the Government of Alberta to allocate sufficient financial resources to improve and streamline its *Water Act* approvals process and systems.

Government Response

Alberta Environment and Parks

Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP) recognizes the concerns that municipalities and industry have expressed regarding lost opportunities from delays in obtaining timely *Water Act* approvals. In order to reduce application processing times, AEP made changes to our internal processes to increase efficiency—including shifting resources to help reduce the number of open files.

AEP is seeking a long-term, creative solution to resolve backlogs caused by the very high number of applications received by the department; some of these backlogs are caused by technical or administrative information missing from some of the applications. The government has developed the Environmental Approvals Plan, which will reduce approval times for regulated activities that require approvals through legislation, such as the *Water Act*, the *Public Lands Act* and the *Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act*.

AEP will be introducing system enhancements and a one-window framework that will be effective, efficient and client-focused through a web-based application platform. This plan will be rolled out over three years. This first phase of this web-based solution, which has been piloted internally, will manage online *Water Act* approvals, including amendment applications and code of practice notices. The full public release occurred in January 2019. These changes to our approvals process will reduce application backlogs, enhance processing timelines and increase the province's regulatory competitiveness.

RMA Reaction and Follow-up

The Government of Alberta response indicates that Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP) is in the process of enhancing the *Water Act* approval system to reduce approval times for activities regulated

under the *Water Act*. This is a positive step, and although new programs and systems are being introduced, the impact of this new processes on approval times is not known. Until noticeable changes to approval times are realized, this resolution is assigned a status of **Intent Not Met** and the RMA will continue to raise this issue with AEP.

Resolution 18-18F

Utility Conflict in Municipal Right of Ways

Red Deer County

Carried

► **Advocacy Target: Alberta Municipal Affairs, Alberta Energy**

WHEREAS municipalities and contractors are experiencing road construction project completion delays and incurring added expense due to utility companies such as TELUS, ATCO and Fortis not meeting schedules for relocation of their infrastructure located within municipal right of ways; and

WHEREAS for many years, utility companies have utilized municipal right of ways for their infrastructure, both overhead and underground utilities; and

WHEREAS over the past several years, conflicts between municipalities and utility companies in relation to road construction and road maintenance projects have increased as utility companies are not meeting their agreed upon schedules for relocation of underground utility lines and overhead power lines; and

WHEREAS although the locating and marking of utilities used to occur within 48 hours, current experience has this process taking up to 10 to 12 days to complete;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta collaborate with the Government of Alberta and other stakeholders to create a better process of locating and marking utilities to alleviate the added costs and delays being incurred by municipalities conducting infrastructure maintenance or construction; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that options considered in this process include:

- **negotiate with utility companies to ensure they honor their schedules or be held responsible to pay for all delays, impacts and costs associated with these delays; and**
- **create a universal master agreement for utility companies to enter into with all municipalities whereby utility companies pay a fee per lineal meter for their utilities to be located within municipal road right of way.**

Government Response

Alberta Utilities Commission

The responsibility and standards around the locating and locating marking of utility infrastructure in Alberta lies with Alberta One Call Corporation. Utility Alberta One-Call is a private, not-for-profit corporation providing a communications service between people who intend to disturb the ground in Alberta and the utility operators who register their buried facilities (members of Alberta One-Call).

Related to the conflict examples provided by the County of Red Deer, Telus Communications Inc., ATCO Electric Ltd., ATCO Gas, ATCO Pipelines and FortisAlberta are all members of Alberta One Call. The organization pledges to have utilities respond within two full working days to contact those requesting a location, or to visit the site and mark the location of buried lines, etc.

The dispute between utilities and municipalities on the timing of both locations and relocations appears to be a commercial dispute between the two parties. It might best be resolved by discussion between them. These matters may possibly be addressed through utility right-of-way agreements, a municipality's bylaw or negotiations between a municipality and the utility, although this is likely on a case-by-case or municipality-specific basis.

In Alberta, a municipality may grant a right, exclusive or otherwise, to a third-party utility to provide utility service in all or part of the municipality under the *Municipal Government Act*. The Alberta Utilities Commission (AUC) approves these agreements. For gas and electric distribution service, many municipalities use the standard or universal franchise template agreements developed and approved by the AUC under its Rule 029: Applications for Municipal Franchise Agreements and Associated Franchise Fee Rate Riders.

These agreements, subject to AUC approval:

- Set out the utility's right to use portions of roads, rights-of-way and other lands controlled or managed by the municipality, to deliver the utility service.
- Provide the means and manner of calculation for the utility to charge a franchise fee to consumers. Within limits, the franchise fee is set by agreement between the utility and the municipality, and is subject to AUC approval. The franchise fee is typically based on delivery revenue of the utility (the cost of the utility service, less the cost of the gas or electricity itself).
- Require a one-year notice from a municipality for infrastructure relocations by the utility reasonably required by the municipality due to planned municipal construction.

The AUC approved franchise agreement template is effectively a universal master agreement between municipalities and utilities, and effectively sets out the financial arrangements between utilities and municipalities for the right to deliver service, and in order for the utility to do so, for the use of municipal rights-of-way.

A proposal to add an additional fee per linear metre would almost certainly increase costs for utility ratepayers and have an impact on that approved utility service arrangement, because utilities are entitled to recover their reasonable costs from ratepayers. The franchise fee and any linear fee is a cost, i.e., a payment to a municipality for use of the streets, roads, etc., which is passed on to the utility's customers who pay it as part of their utility rates. Such a change would require formal AUC approval.

The first round of AUC specified penalties, for contraventions by utility service providers of AUC rules on billing-related standards, came into effect on January 1, 2019 following several months of consultations.

The AUC was empowered to formulate and apply specified penalties for contraventions of its decision documents, such as rules, decisions, orders, etc. The AUC issues no permits and licenses, has no rules and has issued no orders dealing with standards on utility infrastructure location and relocation.

Alberta Energy

Companies or municipalities should contact the AUC if an issue arises that cannot be resolved directly with the distribution owner. A Specified Penalties framework and the rules surrounding terms and condition violations are currently being determined by the AUC and may address part or all of this issue.

Alberta Municipal Affairs

Alberta Municipal Affairs has no input, as the resolution is not within the ministry's mandate.

RMA Reaction and Follow-up

The response provided by the Alberta Utilities Commission (AUC) indicates the unique challenges related to the utility right of way approval process. The first part of this resolution requests an improvement to the utility marking and locating process to reduce delays and costs. The AUC response explains the current process but does not indicate plans to improve it. Not mentioned in the response but relevant to the resolution is the recent passing of Bill 211: *Alberta Underground Infrastructure Notification System Consultation Act* in the Alberta Legislature. Bill 211 would form a committee of the Legislative Assembly to prepare and submit a "report on the underground infrastructure notification system in Alberta, which must include any recommendations for amendments to legislation to improve safety for excavators and to protect underground infrastructure." Among other things, the report must consider "enforcement of rules pertaining to the underground infrastructure notification system." RMA formally submitted the passing of Bill 211 and looks forward to engaging with the committee when they are formed to voice the municipal perspective on underground infrastructure notification, including the issue of delays faced by municipalities.

The second part of this resolution requests the development of a master agreement which would include a fee per lineal metre to be paid by utility companies with infrastructure within a municipality's boundaries. The AUC response raises concerns about the costs such an approach would impose on utility companies, which would be passed along to consumers. RMA looks forward to discussing this approach and its pros and cons with the AUC. At this point, this resolution is assigned a status of **Intent Not Met**, but RMA looks forward to progressing on this issue through Bill 211 and other discussions with the AUC.

Resolution 19-18F

Separation of Industrial Hemp from Cannabis Regulations

Brazeau County

Carried

► ***Advocacy Target: Alberta Agriculture and Forestry, Alberta Justice and Solicitor General***

WHEREAS Canada is one of the world's largest hemp producers, growing an estimated 138,000 acres in 2017; and

WHEREAS the Government of Canada is beginning to allow cannabidiol (CBD) extraction from hemp concurrently with the development of regulations for adult-use recreational cannabis; and

WHEREAS on April 18, 2018, the Government of Ontario announced changes to regulate cannabis below 0.3% tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) (hemp plant and its derivatives) within the authority of agriculture, setting the tone for change across the county; and

WHEREAS this movement would be welcome news for many Canadian hemp farmers, entrepreneurs and investors providing a strong market advantage for hemp-based CBD products in North America;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta advocate to the Government of Alberta to classify industrial hemp as an agriculture product.

Government Response

Alberta Agriculture and Forestry

Alberta Agriculture and Forestry (AF) is encouraged by the growing interest in industrial hemp. We recognize hemp as an emerging value-added crop opportunity for our province. Alberta ranks in the top two of permitted industrial hemp acres in North America with 44,684 of permitted acres in 2017. Alberta also possesses industry-leading research and development capacities, a supportive business environment, plus excellent logistics and transportation networks.

Industrial hemp is regulated federally under the *Cannabis Act* via the Industrial Hemp Regulations. Our understanding is Ontario's regulation has exempted industrial hemp-related activities from Ontario's *Cannabis Control Act*. This allows federal industrial hemp license holders to exercise their licenses without contravening provincial law.

Alberta's *Gaming, Liquor and Cannabis Act* is drafted in a manner that allows federal industrial hemp licensees to exercise their licenses. This means Alberta does not require additional regulation. There is also no need to specify hemp as an agriculture product through provincial legislation. Other Alberta laws use the term agriculture product, but either do not define the term or define it to include all crops. This means farmed hemp is already subject to these laws.

AF recognizes the challenges faced by producers and processors as the regulatory system continues to evolve. We will continue to explore ways to support hemp producers and processors to grow this industry within the federal regulatory framework. Alberta will continue to advocate for an efficient, effective regulatory system to support economic development, ensure the health and safety of Canadians, and meet the needs of Albertans.

Alberta Justice and Solicitor General

Alberta Justice and Solicitor General has no input, as the resolution is no longer within the ministry's mandate.

RMA Reaction and Follow-up

RMA appreciates the clarification of jurisdiction from Alberta Agriculture and Forestry. Given that there is no provincial regulation or Act limiting industrial hemp production, reclassifying industrial hemp at a provincial level is unnecessary in Alberta if a producer is approved federally through the *Cannabis Act*.

RMA assigns this resolution a status of **Accepted**.

Resolution 20-18F

Decommissioning Costs for Wind Energy Developments

MD of Pincher Creek

Carried

► **Advocacy Target: Alberta Energy**

WHEREAS the Alberta Utilities Commission (AUC) regulates the utilities sector, natural gas and electricity markets to protect social, economic and environmental interests of Alberta where competitive market forces do not; and

WHEREAS the AUC ensures that electric facilities are built, operated and decommissioned in an efficient and environmentally responsible way; and

WHEREAS provincial growth and policy has increased the amount of development of wind power plants and their associated infrastructure; and

WHEREAS wind power plants have a limited life-cycle and will require either decommissioning or repowering at the end of that life cycle; and

WHEREAS if a wind power plant is abandoned during or after its life cycle, the components and associated infrastructure may be abandoned on the landscape, becoming an unsafe and unsightly nuisance, creating a costly cleanup for landowners, and further, the affected municipality; and

WHEREAS pursuant to Section 5(1)(h) of the *Hydro and Electric Energy Act*, the AUC may make regulations as to the measures to be taken in the construction, operation or abandonment of any power plant for the protection of life, property and wildlife; and

WHEREAS pursuant to Section 5(4) of the *Hydro and Electric Energy Act*, subject to the approval of the Minister responsible for the *Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act*, the AUC may make regulations as to the measures to be taken in the abandonment of any power plant for the control of pollution and ensuring environment conservation; and

WHEREAS the AUC falls within the structure of the Ministry of Energy, and the Ministry develops policy for renewable electricity;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta request Alberta Energy to direct the Alberta Utilities Commission to establish a method of ensuring that there is funding in place to ensure that an abandoned wind energy plant is decommissioned and reclaimed in an environmentally responsible way.

Government Response

Alberta Environment and Parks

Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP) recently released the Conservation and Reclamation Directive for Renewable Energy Operations. This directive outlines the requirements for these operations to abandon, remediate (if necessary), and reclaim the disturbed land to an acceptable condition.

While the directive does not address a funding mechanism for abandoned renewable energy operations, this topic was brought up by stakeholders during the engagement process for the directive. The

renewable energy industry is relatively new, and policies and programs to address long-term operational concerns are still evolving.

Alberta Energy

Alberta Energy has no further input beyond the response from AEP.

RMA Reaction and Follow-up

The RMA has been involved in a number of consultation on the end-of-life management of renewable energy infrastructure in Alberta to ensure that, when the time for decommissioning occurs, that reclamation and remediation can occur in a timely and effective manner that will minimize future impacts to the land, neighbours, and land owners. In comparison to oil and gas activity, there are several differences between oil and gas and renewable energy which are related to the nature of the resource itself. Landowners have more control over the direct citing of renewable energy projects and have a great ability to request accountability for the end-of-life management if they are informed at the outset of a project. The RMA has developed, in partnership with the Miistakis Institute, a resource to inform municipalities of the renewable energy approval process.

The Government of Alberta has not outlined specific rules about the end-of-life management of renewable energy projects and as such, the status of this resolution is **Intent Not Met**. The RMA will communicate any future changes on this file to RMA members.

Resolution 21-18F

Scrap Metal (Copper) Theft

Woodlands County

Carried

► **Advocacy Target: Alberta Justice and Solicitor General**

WHEREAS in 2013, the Government of Alberta passed legislation called the Scrap Metal Dealers and Recyclers Identification Act; and

WHEREAS scrap metal means new or used items substantially made of aluminum, brass, bronze, copper, stainless steel, steel, tin or other metal prescribed by the regulations; and

WHEREAS the Scrap Metal Dealers and Recyclers Identification Act requires scrap metal dealers or recyclers purchasing or receiving scrap metal to record the information of the transaction and proof of identity of the person selling the scrap metal; and

WHEREAS within 24 hours of purchasing or receiving scrap metal of a weight that is greater than a weight prescribed in the regulations, a scrap metal dealer or recycler shall provide the prescribed information collected under this section to a law enforcement agency; and

WHEREAS the Government of Alberta has not proclaimed the legislation and published the regulation for the Scrap Metal Dealers and Recyclers Identification Act;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta advocate to the Government of Alberta to proclaim the *Scrap Metal Dealers and Recyclers Identification Act* and create the regulation to assist with the deterrence of copper theft and other scrap metal.

Government Response

Alberta Justice and Solicitor General

Alberta has a limited legislative framework to address scrap metal theft. Owners and law enforcement must rely on municipal bylaws and the *Criminal Code*, which have not effectively deterred scrap metal theft.

To solve scrap metal theft, a private member's bill (Bill 201) was introduced on May 30, 2012 regulating the sale, purchase, and disposal of scrap metal. It passed third reading and the *Scrap Metal Dealers and Recyclers Identification Act* received royal assent April 29, 2013. Because it was a private member's bill, there was limited opportunity for Government of Alberta ministries to research scrap metal theft or review the experience of other jurisdictions in the development of a fulsome legislative response.

Consultations were held on the *Scrap Metal Dealers and Recyclers Identification Act* (the Act) in 2014-2015 with a view to developing a regulation. Alberta Justice and Solicitor General (JSG) and stakeholders had significant concerns about the Act, which included:

- regulation of scrap metal sales by weight alone;
- no regulation of mobile operators or cash transactions;
- no consideration as to how police services, industry, and metal recyclers would work together on implementation, or the role of police services in enforcement, and whether they have sufficient resources to investigate scrap metal thefts; and

- the placement of an undue administrative burden upon scrap metal dealers and recyclers.

Based on stakeholder feedback and the ministry's concerns, the Act was never proclaimed.

JSG recognizes that scrap metal theft represents a significant challenge for municipalities, law enforcement, construction companies, scrap metal recyclers, and power and telecommunications companies. In particular, scrap metal theft is a safety risk when it interferes with critical infrastructure. First responders, the public, work crews, and employees repairing damaged infrastructure are placed at risk. Moreover, scrap metal theft can result in catastrophic loss of life, serious injury, interference with public infrastructure and services, and economic losses. Companies and contractors are financially impacted by scrap metal theft due to delayed project completion, replacement costs, repair costs, and insurance deductibles.

The JSG Public Security Division recently has been working with a stakeholder group on the issue. The group consists of security professionals from electrical and telecommunications industries, metal recyclers, and law enforcement agencies from across Alberta. It meets regularly to discuss industry strategies to reduce scrap metal theft. The group reports ongoing and serious critical infrastructure concerns as a result of scrap metal theft, and notes its members face numerous challenges preventing scrap metal theft.

Recently, JSG met with Service Alberta (SA) to discuss scrap metal theft. Working with SA is the most appropriate means to develop a strategy to deal with this issue, since it has implications in a wide range of areas (e.g., justice and law enforcement, insurance, municipal affairs, environmental protection, the regulation of industry, and consumer protection). The two ministries agreed to establish a working group to review the issue and develop a strategy for scrap metal theft prevention and critical infrastructure protection by the summer of 2019. The strategy may include legislation.

RMA Reaction and Follow-up

The Government of Alberta response indicates that action has been taken in the past to address scrap metal theft through the *Scrap Metal Dealers and Recyclers Identification Act*. RMA can appreciate that upon consultation, the Act was deemed as inadequate in addressing the issue, though it is concerning that further work on the topic will not commence until 2019 after the Bill received Royal Assent in 2013 and was dismissed by stakeholders in 2015.

That being said, RMA is pleased that a cross-ministry working group is planned to address the issue, and that the Government of Alberta is aware of the significant financial, liability and public safety impacts of scrap metal theft.

RMA assigns this resolution a status of **Accepted in Principle**, and will monitor the resolution and the progress of the working group.

Resolution 22-18F

Amendment to the Wildlife Regulations Regarding Cougars

MD of Smoky River

Carried

► **Advocacy Target: Alberta Environment and Parks**

WHEREAS according to the Alberta Environment and Parks document titled *Management Plan for Cougars in Alberta, Wildlife Management Planning Series Number 8*, cougar (*Puma concolor*) sightings and interactions among humans increased in the 20-year period up to 2012; and

WHEREAS in Alberta, according to the *Wildlife Regulation*, a landowner or occupant can authorize any resident to assist with the killing of wolves or bears legally on his or her property at any time of year, however only the owner or occupant of land may kill a cougar; and

WHEREAS multiple sources indicate that the appropriate way to deal with a cougar that has encroached and interacts fearlessly with humans is to euthanize it; and

WHEREAS landowners, especially those with little or no hunting or firearms experience, or who lack appropriate firearms, are ill-equipped to protect themselves, their families, their livestock or their pets in the case where cougars encroach on their properties;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta request the Government of Alberta to amend section 7, subsection 3 of the *Wildlife Regulation* to provide the same hunting allowances for cougars on private land that already exist for wolves and black bears; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that section 7, subsection 8 of the *Wildlife Regulation*, which establishes separate hunting allowances for cougars on private land, be repealed; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that reporting a cougar kill remain as a requirement of the *Wildlife Regulation*.

Government Response

Alberta Environment and Parks

Cougar populations in Alberta are carefully managed to ensure sustainably, as the species is vulnerable to overharvest. Cougars are managed more carefully than black bears and wolves, using quota-dependent seasons. Overharvest on private lands has an impact on conservation efforts within entire cougar management areas. Maintaining quotas on cougars is important to conservation efforts.

Cougar harvest by landowners is authorized to protect property and people. Hunting “problem cougars” on private land by a designate of the owner may undermine conservation efforts and could potentially be dangerous if done improperly. However, Fish and Wildlife staff have the expertise and access to professional houndsmen who are trained to respond to problem cougar complaints. Cougars that pose a threat to people, property and livestock can be reported to Fish and Wildlife staff, who will respond directly.

RMA Reaction and Follow-up

The response from the Government of Alberta indicates that there is not anticipated legislative or regulatory changes that impact the management of cougars and therefore, this status is assigned a status of **Intent Not Met**.

Resolution 23-18F

Social Well-Being of An Employee and Domestic Violence – Occupational Health and Safety Act

MD of Willow Creek

Carried

► **Advocacy Target: Alberta Labour**

WHEREAS the term “domestic violence” is now included in the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* (OHSA), requiring employers to address domestic violence; and

WHEREAS the OHSA requires employers to be responsible for the “social well-being” of employees;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta request that the Government of Alberta define what is meant by “social well-being” of an employee within the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* (OHSA) and the responsibilities of an employer with regard to “domestic violence or suspicion of domestic violence” within the OHSA.

Government Response

Alberta Labour

The new *Occupational Health and Safety Act* (OHSA) and changes to the Code came into effect June 1, 2018, and defines “health and safety” as including physical, psychological and social well-being. This requires workplaces to deal with hazards to physical health and safety, as well as hazards to psychological and social well-being, including harassment and violence. The definition of “violence” in the updated OHSA includes domestic violence.

While social well-being is included in the new definition of “health and safety” in the OHSA, it is not separately defined in that Act. Generally, social well-being is an element of mental health involving relationships that contribute to an overall state of well-being where an individual can work productively.

Regarding domestic violence, when an employer becomes aware that a worker is, or is likely to be, exposed to domestic violence at the work site, the employer is required to protect the worker and any other person at the work site likely to be affected.

Domestic violence becomes a workplace hazard and is no longer limited to a personal issue, when it occurs or spills over into the workplace, or there is reason to believe that it could occur at the workplace. It may put the targeted worker at risk and may pose a threat to co-workers. The employer must inform workers on site of the threat of potential violence while preserving privacy as much as possible.

To reduce the hazard, employers can take steps such as removing the worker involved from public view and enhancing security measures. Employers may wish to contact external support agencies with domestic violence expertise to determine their best approach and steps. The OHSA does not intend for employers to become involved in their workers’ personal lives.

RMA Reaction and Follow-up

The Government of Alberta response indicates that although “social well-being” is now included in the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* (OHSA), it is not specifically defined. As monitoring and identifying risks to social well-being can often be much more difficult than physical aspects of health and safety,

employers (including municipalities) may face significant difficulties in balancing the need to be aware of situations which may compromise social well-being with the need to respect the privacy of their employees, even within the workplace. For employers to effectively monitor the social well-being of their employees, further guidance is needed from the Government of Alberta.

The Government of Alberta response is effective in clarifying how domestic violence is linked to the workplace and employer. Clarifying that this is a valid consideration in health and safety planning will help to support safe workplaces. However, like the comment above, guidance on how municipalities can appropriately monitor their workplace for risks of domestic violence without infringing on employee property would be appreciated.

RMA assigns this resolution a status of **Accepted in Part**, and will continue to advocate on greater clarity around defining “social well-being.”

Resolution 24-18F

Review of Education Funding Formula

Athabasca County

Carried

► **Advocacy Target: Alberta Education**

WHEREAS school boards receive education funding primarily on a per student basis; and

WHEREAS rural populations are declining in some areas of Alberta; and

WHEREAS school jurisdictions with declining enrolments experience funding reductions that far exceed their ability to reasonably reduce expenses;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta supports the Alberta School Boards Association position that the Government of Alberta review the K-12 funding formula for schools and school boards.

Government Response

Alberta Education

Alberta Education's (AE) funding framework allocates funding to school authorities based on the demographic and geographic environment within which services are delivered to students. All of the cost formulas of the funding framework consider a number of important factors and allocation criteria that work together to provide a pool of resources tailored to the needs of each jurisdiction. This of course includes enrollment demands and trends in rural areas.

Our government has heard from Alberta's school boards about the need to ensure education funding be equitably allocated so as to support all school communities. AE staff are happy to consult with key stakeholder groups, including the Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA), and take this input into consideration during the next review of the funding framework.

AE has made historic advancements over the past four years. We are fighting for what matters, like ensuring every child in Alberta gets an education that prepares them for success—whether they live in downtown Calgary or in a rural area. Our government is focused on improving classroom education for all children in every corner of Alberta by reversing planned cuts and hiring teachers, building and modernizing schools and reducing the burden of school fees for parents.

Despite the worst economic downturn in a generation, together with stakeholders like the RMA, we have committed to building and hiring not cutting and firing, putting almost 4000 new teachers and support staff into our schools. Over the past 4 years, we funded 244 school projects in every corner of the province and 169 schools have opened their doors so far, creating thousands of new student spaces and adjusting to demands from across the province.

We understand that rural schools often face unique challenges. That is why we help boards with declining enrolment through the Small Schools by Necessity and the Equity Opportunity grants.

RMA Reaction and Follow-up

The Government of Alberta response indicates that the current funding formula takes into account a variety of factors and is intended to allow for comparable education experiences for all children

regardless of where in the province they live. The response states that Alberta Education will invite input from RMA during the next review of the funding formula, but provides no information on when that may take place.

This resolution a status of **Intent Not Met**, and RMA will continue to advocate for a review of the education funding formula.

Section 2: Advocacy Report Card

The following table is a summary of RMA's current resolutions excluding the resolutions adopted in fall 2018, which are detailed in Section 1. Recent developments on the resolutions are detailed below in the corresponding categories, and readers are reminded that although resolution statuses may remain unchanged, work on each resolution is ongoing. Each resolution has a three-year lifespan to reflect the nature of shifting government policy development and timelines associated with legislative changes and implementation.

Resolutions at a Glance

#	RESOLUTION TITLE	STATUS
AGRICULTURE		
4-18S	Support for Continuation of Grant Funding for Agricultural Initiatives Program	Intent Not Met
8-17F	Provincial Communications Plan for Farm Workplace Legislation	Accepted
ER2-17F	Continued Provincial Funding Support for Agriculture Service Boards and Agricultural Societies	Accepted
7-17S	Eradication of Bovine Tuberculosis and Brucellosis Prevalent in Bison Within and Surrounding Wood Buffalo National Park	Intent Not Met
BROADBAND AND CONNECTIVITY		
3-17S	National Broadband Strategy	Accepted in Part
11-16F	Stakeholder Participation in the Future of the Alberta SuperNet	Intent Not Met
COMMUNITY SERVICES		
10-17S	Modernization of Alberta Registry Agents	Accepted in Part
22-16F	Security of Canada Post Community and Super Mailboxes	Accepted in Principle
EMERGENCY SERVICES		
12-17F	Specialized Clinical Counselling and Therapy for Distressed Emergency First Responders	Accepted in Principle

#	RESOLUTION TITLE	STATUS
18-17F	Integrate Emergency Social Services into Emergency Management at Provincial Level	Accepted
12-16F	Wildland Fire Fighting Costs	Intent Not Met
18-16F	Provincial Responsibility for Fire Costs on Occupied Public Lands	Intent Not Met
ENERGY		
6-18S	Wind Energy Regulations Required at Provincial Level	Intent Not Met
10-18S	Tenure Extension Requirements for Unconventional Development	Intent Not Met
5-17F	Alberta Energy Regulator – Amendment to Transfer Approval Process	Intent Not Met
10-17F	Provincial Industry-led Methane Flaring Strategy	Intent Not Met
6-17F	Financial Support from AAMDC for Appeal of Virginia Hills/Dolomite Decision	Accepted
5-17S	Secure Access to Natural Gas Pipelines	Intent Not Met
5-16F	Continued Operation of Coal-fired Power Generation Plants	Intent Not Met
13-16F	Northern Gateway Pipelines Support	Intent Not Met
19-16F	Support for Multi-Stakeholder Task Force to Explore Value-Added Oil and Gas Opportunities	Accepted in Principle
ENVIRONMENT		
8-18S	Amendments Required for Provincial Recycling Regulations	Intent Not Met
9-18S	Exemption of Seniors Housing from Requirement to Pay Carbon Levy	Accepted in Part
11-18S	Recycling of Solar Panels	Intent Not Met
2-17F	Completion of Alberta's Land-use Framework Prior to Establishment of Conservation and Protected Areas for Species at Risk	Accepted in Principle
3-17F	Municipal Action on Caribou Recovery Planning	Intent Not Met
4-17F	Water Act Approvals for Municipal Projects on Municipal Land	Intent Not Met

#	RESOLUTION TITLE	STATUS
1-17S	Carbon Levy Exemption of Natural Gas and Propane for All Food Production Uses	Intent Not Met
6-17S	Addendum to the <i>Species at Risk Act</i>	Incomplete Information
9-17S	Legal Opinion for Species at Risk Proposed Policies	Accepted in Principle
1-16F	Alberta Environment Approvals for Construction Projects	Accepted in Principle
2-16F	Exemption of Municipalities from Carbon Levy	Intent Not Met
6-16F	Carbon Levy Exemption on Natural Gas and Propane Used for Agricultural Operations	Intent Not Met
15-16F	Species at Risk and the Need for an Overall Socio-Economic Impact Assessment	Accepted in Principle
HEALTH & SENIORS		
14-17F	<i>Cannabis Act</i>	Intent Not Met
INDUSTRY AND RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT		
ER1-17F	Support for Trans Mountain Expansion Project	Accepted in Part
10-16F	Funding Model for Sand and Aggregate Pit Reclamation	Intent Not Met
14-16F	Conservation and Reclamation of Class 1 Gravel Pits	Accepted in Principle
MUNICIPAL GOVERNANCE AND FINANCE		
1-18S	Request for Implementation of the 2018 Assessment Year Modifier for Well and Pipeline Assessments	Intent Not Met
1-17F	Centralization of Industrial Properties Assessment	Intent Not Met
2-17S	Amendments to Section 348 of the <i>Municipal Government Act</i>	Intent Not Met
4-17S	Collection of Outstanding Taxes for Education Requisitions From the Province of Alberta	Accepted
8-17S	Oldman River Regional Services Commission Regional Planning Funding	Intent Not Met

#	RESOLUTION TITLE	STATUS
3-16F	Implementation of the Centralized Industrial Property Assessment	Intent Not Met
4-16F	Centralized Industrial Assessment	Intent Not Met
17-16F	Capital Region Board Mandate Expansion	Intent Not Met
23-16F	List of Municipal Electors	Intent Not Met
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT		
7-18S	Standards for Property Contaminated by Fentanyl and Carfentanil	Accepted in Principle
19-17F	Builder Licensing Program Impacts	Intent Not Met
POLICING AND RURAL CRIME		
2-18S	Combatting Rural Crime	Accepted in Part
3-18S	Increase Crown Prosecutor Staffing Levels for Rural Municipalities	Accepted in Principle
12-18S	Victim Services Units Funding	Accepted in Part
TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE		
11-17S	Review of Standard Practices for Installation of High Tension Cable Barriers on Two-Lane Provincial Highways	Intent Not Met
7-16F	Vegetation Management on Alberta Provincial Highways	Accepted in Part
16-16F	Support for Continuation of Crude Oil Tanker Activity Along the Northern Coast of British Columbia	Intent Not Met
OTHER		
5-18S	Provincial Government Consultation and Communication Protocol with Municipalities	Intent Not Met
9-17F	AAMDC Refusal to Engage in Exploratory Discussion to Merge with AUMA	Accepted

#	RESOLUTION TITLE	STATUS
13-17F	AAMDC Advisory Committee to Support the Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission in Reviewing Charitable Gaming in Alberta	Accepted
15-17F	Stopping the Implementation of Proposed Federal Tax Reforms	Accepted in Part
ER3-17F	Effective Representation for Rural Albertans in Alberta's Legislative Assembly	Intent Not Met
8-16F	Resolution Process – Frequency of Similar or Duplicate Resolutions	Accepted
20-16F	Casino Opportunities for Charitable Organizations	Accepted in Principle
ER1-16F	Save Vegreville's Case Processing Centre	Intent Not Met

AGRICULTURE

Resolution 4-18S

Support for Continuation of Grant Funding for Agricultural Initiatives Program

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) advocate to the Government of Alberta to re-instate or replace the Agriculture Initiatives Program funding for local agricultural societies.

DEVELOPMENTS: RMA recognizes the fiscal challenges faced by the Government of Alberta and is encouraged by the three-year funding commitment to agriculture societies in Alberta and the eligibility of agriculture societies under the Community Facility Enhancement Program and Community Initiatives Program. However, these grants were previously available, require agriculture societies to compete for funding with other non-profit organizations, and do not adequately substitute for the loss of the Agriculture Initiatives Program (AIP), which was specifically available for capital funding for agriculture societies. Therefore, the resolution is assigned a status of **Intent Not Met**.

Resolution 8-17F

Provincial Communications Plan for Farm Workplace Legislation

Status: Accepted

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties request that the Government of Alberta develop and implement a communications plan to advise Alberta's agriculture sector of actual and intended changes regarding workplace legislation, with the outcome of establishing increased awareness and effective change management.

DEVELOPMENTS: The Government of Alberta response indicates that over the past several years, information on changes to farm and ranch workplace legislation, as well as opportunities for stakeholder input into such changes, have occurred through multiple means and have been based on an intent to raise both awareness and understanding of the changes among employers and employees in the farm and ranch sector. The Government of Alberta's communication to producers is evident and though it is unclear if a 'communications plan' as referenced in the resolution was developed, it is clear that a degree of planning was involved to inform those affected by the changes. This resolution is assigned a status of **Accepted**.

Resolution ER2-17F

Continued Provincial Funding Support for Agriculture Service Boards and Agricultural Societies

Status: Accepted

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties strongly encourage the continued financial support through the Alberta Lottery program or a similar program for agriculture service boards and agricultural societies beyond 2017-2018.

DEVELOPMENTS: As announced at the RMA 2018 Spring Convention, agriculture service boards and agricultural societies will see a three-year funding commitment starting in the provincial budget 2018-19. The budget allotted for 2018-19 is very similar to funding levels in previous years. This resolution is assigned a status of **Accepted**.

Resolution 7-17S

Eradication of Bovine Tuberculosis and Brucellosis Prevalent in Bison Within and Surrounding Wood Buffalo National Park

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties supports the depopulation of diseased bison as the only effective tool to successfully eradicate the threat of bovine tuberculosis and brucellosis from within and surrounding Wood Buffalo National Park; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties urge Alberta Agriculture and Forestry and Parks Canada to develop an effective measurable plan to successfully eradicate all diseased bison from within and surrounding Wood Buffalo National Park in order to prevent further disease outbreaks province-wide; that would inevitably have adverse effects for the national, provincial and local domestic cattle and beef industries.

DEVELOPMENTS: This resolution specifically calls for the depopulation of diseased bison to eradicate the threat of bovine tuberculosis and brucellosis in the Wood Buffalo National Park area; however, responses from the provincial and federal governments do not indicate support for this level of action. Both the provincial and federal governments do indicate that continued effort is needed to understand the risk of transmission, and note that this will involve consultation and engagement with multiple stakeholders.

Until such time that a formal consultation process is initialized to develop a strategy to address the eradication of diseased bison from the Wood Buffalo National Park area that would prevent further outbreaks, this resolution holds a status of **Intent Not Met**.

BROADBAND AND CONNECTIVITY

Resolution 3-17S

National Broadband Strategy

Status: Accepted in Part

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties (AAMDC) request that the governments of Alberta and Canada declare broadband an essential service; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that the AAMDC request that the governments of Alberta and Canada provide direct funding and support to rural, remote and northern communities to ensure affordable access to, or the development of, high speed (100 Mbps and faster) community network infrastructure; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that the AAMDC urge the Government of Canada to develop a national broadband strategy; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that rural municipalities, internet service providers, education and health professionals, public safety organizations, and research and economic development authorities be actively involved in preparing the National Broadband Strategy.

DEVELOPMENTS: The Government of Alberta response indicates broad support of the resolution's call for increased action on the part of government and industry in enhancing rural broadband availability and quality. RMA is pleased with the direction that the Government of Alberta has taken to this point in prioritizing rural final mile connectivity in their development of a new SuperNet operating agreement. The Government of Alberta is currently in the process of developing a rural broadband strategy, and has convened an inter-ministerial working group to do so. In early 2018, RMA assisted Service Alberta in promoting a survey to members to gather baseline information on rural broadband service delivery. In the fall of 2018, Service Alberta gathered feedback from the RMA Board of Directors on the broadband strategy, including the strategy's scope, implementation, oversight, and priority areas. Service Alberta also provide an update on the strategy to RMA members at the Fall 2018 RMA Convention. Service Alberta has indicated that formal information on the strategy will be released in early 2019, but at this point it has not yet been released.

At the federal level, RMA is pleased with the 2016 Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) policy that declared broadband as a basic telecommunications service, which is the telecommunications equivalent of an essential service, and empowers the CRTC to implement programs, policies, regulations and initiatives to improve broadband in underserved areas. One such initiative being undertaken in relation to the basic service declaration is a \$750 million fund to enhance broadband in rural areas, to be funded by industry. CRTC released details on the fund in fall 2018, and expects to begin accepting applications in 2019. The fund will include an option for municipalities to apply for direct funding.

In February 2019, the CRTC conducted a consultation on their application guide for the broadband fund.

A second aspect of the CRTC's declaration of broadband as a basic service was to increase the threshold for underserved areas from those with service below 5mbps download / 1mbps upload to 50mbps download / 10mbps upload. In their 2018 budget, the Government of Canada also announced that \$100 million over five years has been dedicated to the Strategic Innovation Fund, will mainly be used to advanced low earth orbit satellite technology to improve broadband service in rural and remote communities. Further, the 2019 Government of Canada budget allocates \$1.7 billion in new funding with the goal of all Canadians having access to 50mbps download and 10mbps upload speeds by 2030.

In October 2018, the Government of Canada, in collaboration with provincial and territorial governments, announced their intent to develop a national broadband strategy that will focus on providing high-speed broadband to rural and remote communities across Canada. The federal and provincial/territorial governments also committed to collaborating with one another, industry, municipalities, public institutions and Indigenous communities to develop that strategy. Although this announcement is encouraging, details on the formal strategy have not yet been released.

Despite the positive progress made recently by the provincial and federal governments related to enhancing rural broadband, there is no indication as to when a national strategy will be completed. Therefore, this resolution is assigned a status of **Accepted in Part** due to the federal declaration of broadband as a basic telecommunications service and the Government of Canada's willingness to pursue a broadband strategy, both of which meets the intent of part of the resolution. RMA will continue to advocate to Service Alberta for continued progress on a provincial broadband strategy.

Resolution 11-16F

Stakeholder Participation in the Future of the Alberta SuperNet

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties lobby the Government of Alberta to establish a multi-stakeholder advisory committee to participate in a review of the existing agreement which expires on June 30, 2018 and make recommendations for the new agreement that would be effective July 1, 2018.

DEVELOPMENTS: The Government of Alberta's response indicates that they are not able to form a formal multi-stakeholder working group to inform the development of a new SuperNet operating agreement, mainly due to time constraints and the pace at which the process is moving. RMA appreciates the willingness with which Service Alberta has shared information related to the new operating agreement, as well as the consideration that Service Alberta has shown for the importance of improving rural broadband access. RMA hopes that this recognition is reflected in the new operating agreement. Despite the positive relationship that RMA has with

Service Alberta related to the SuperNet, it is disappointing that a working group that more directly integrates the perspectives of individual rural municipalities cannot be formed to better inform the process. RMA has been informed that Service Alberta is planning to develop a working group in 2019 to guide the implementation of the province-wide broadband strategy, and that the working group will likely involve RMA or rural municipal representation. The working group has not yet been formed at this point.

This resolution is assigned the status of **Intent Not Met**, although RMA looks forward to continuing to collaborate with Service Alberta on this matter, through the broadband strategy working group and other means.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Resolution 10-17S

Modernization of Alberta Registry Agents

Status: Accepted in Part

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties request that the Government of Alberta recognize the vital role of Alberta registry agents in the delivery of essential government services to all Albertans; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that the Government of Alberta recognize the positive impact in rural Alberta communities, and work to strengthen their partnership with the Association of Alberta Registry Agents and local municipalities by:

- Supporting the modernization of the registry agent industry;
- Expanding existing online services directly to Albertans through registry agents; and
- Ensuring the long-term sustainability of rural registry agents, including a fair and equitable fee model.

DEVELOPMENTS: The Government of Alberta response includes recognition of the vital role that registry agents play in supporting the quality of life of Albertans.

RMA appreciates the Government of Alberta's prioritization of maintaining access to in-person registry services during any modernization process. In a March 2018 meeting with RMA, the Minister of Service Alberta explained that from the Government of Alberta's perspective, the resolution's request to allow specific registry agents to provide online services was impractical and would lead to prohibitively high registry fees. According to the Minister, the current system in which online services are centrally managed by the Government of Alberta and the Alberta Association of Registry Agents is the system best-suited to support the sustainability of independent registry agents in providing in-person services, while keeping registry fees manageable for Albertans.

This resolution is assigned a status of **Accepted in Part**, and RMA will continue to advocate on this issue.

Resolution 22-16F

Security of Canada Post Community and Super Mailboxes

Status: Accepted in Principle

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties request that Canada Post work to increase efforts to enhance the security of community and super mailboxes including siting them in open and plainly visible locations in consultation with municipalities,

increasing their ability to resist break-in attempts, and implementing a strategy to reduce illegal access and theft of mail from Community and Super Mailboxes.

DEVELOPMENTS: Canada Post's response indicates an intent to take action on relocating mailboxes, installing new, more secure mailboxes, and retrofitting existing mail boxes to increase their security and resistance to break-ins and tampering. The response also provides examples of current community engagement actions being taken by Canada Post to work with local law enforcement in Alberta.

RMA is pleased with the planned activities and will follow up with Canada Post in the future to confirm that they are completed and to determine their effectiveness in preventing mail theft. At this point, this resolution is assigned a status of **Accepted in Principle**.

EMERGENCY SERVICES

Resolution 12-17F

Specialized Clinical Counselling and Therapy for Distressed Emergency First Responders

Status: Accepted in Principle

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties strongly encourages the Government of Alberta to create and staff a governmental unit capable of providing specialized clinical counselling and therapy for distressed emergency first responders capable of servicing and travelling to all regions of the Province.

DEVELOPMENTS: The overall Government of Alberta response indicates a wide range of existing preventative and post-incident mental health support systems for emergency first responders, as well as ongoing activities to enhance and broaden such services in the wake of first responders' roles in responding to recent natural disasters in Alberta.

The Alberta Health response indicates a current initiative to deliver regional reintegration training for paramedics suffering psychological injuries with the goal of supporting their return to work. Similarly, the Alberta Municipal Affairs response indicates an effort to improve the coordination and accessibility of multiple separate programs supporting the mental health of first responders. These examples both align with the intent of the resolution, which is to centralize mental health supports for first responders under a single "governmental unit" with the capability to provide such services in all regions of the province. RMA is also pleased by the Government of Alberta's December 2018 announcement of an emergency medical services (EMS) action plan, which includes one million dollars in funding to support the mental health of EMS workers.

RMA appreciates the efforts of the Government of Alberta in supporting the mental health of first responders. As the government response reflects elements of the centralized, mobile unit requested in the operative clause, this resolution is assigned a status of **Accepted in Principle**, and RMA will follow up with Alberta Health and Municipal Affairs to determine whether the changes references will meaningfully improve the integration and mobility of first responder mental health support services.

RMA is also pleased by the Government of Canada's recent announcement of a \$29 million plan to address mental health and post-traumatic stress disorder in emergency personnel, including \$10 million for an "internet-based cognitive behavioral therapy pilot" to improve access to care for emergency personnel. RMA looks forward to learning more about the details of this program and how it will support emergency first responders operating in rural areas.

Resolution 18-17F

Integrate Emergency Social Services into Emergency Management at Provincial Level

Status: Accepted

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties urge the Government of Alberta to consolidate emergency social services and emergency management into a single government ministry with a single emergency coordination centre to eliminate duplication and enhance coordination of provincial support to local authorities.

DEVELOPMENTS: The government response indicates that in response to challenges responding to disasters in 2013 and 2016, the Government of Alberta has recently integrated emergency social services into the broader Provincial Operations Centre to better coordinate immediate emergency management with the provision of emergency social services. Based on this response, RMA assigns this resolution a status of **Accepted**.

Additionally, RMA is pleased by the Government of Alberta's announcement of integration of Alberta Emergency Alert with a new national emergency alert system, which will further improve the efficiency by which first responders and the public can become aware of emergency situations.

Resolution 12-16F

Wildland Fire Fighting Costs

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties urge the Government of Alberta to enter into mutual aid agreements with municipalities outside of the Forest Protection Area that do not involve a fee for service for provincially-controlled and paid-for wildland fire fighting resources.

DEVELOPMENTS: The Government response highlights two important programs that municipalities have outside of the Fire Protection Area (FPA) but does indicate that the Minister is not obligated to reimburse costs to municipalities when they incur firefighting related costs from wildfires. Though Mutual Aid Resource Sharing Agreements may be widespread and the Government response indicated that it is standard practice for Alberta Agriculture and Forestry to reimburse for wildfire suppression costs outside the FPA, RMA staff have interpreted the intent of the resolution to guarantee that the Government of Alberta enter into mutual aid agreements with municipalities to ensure all costs are properly reimbursed. Though there are programs to support the costs associated with wildfire suppression, the government response does not meet this intent and therefore, this resolution is assigned a status of **Intent Not Met**.

Resolution 18-16F

Provincial Responsibility for Fire Costs on Occupied Public Lands

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties request that the Government of Alberta amend Section 8 of the *Forest and Prairie Protection Act* by including occupied public lands to enable the reimbursement of firefighting costs on those lands.

DEVELOPMENTS: The Government of Alberta response indicates that because existing mechanisms allow municipalities to apply for partial reimbursement of wildfire suppression costs on occupied lands through the Municipal Wildfire Assistance Program, a change to the *Forest and Prairie Protection Act* is not necessary. RMA is concerned that this program does not guarantee municipalities reimbursement, and only reimburses up to 75% of their costs. As the resolution requests an amendment to the *Forest and Prairie Protection Act* to provide municipalities with assurances that they will have these costs reimbursed, this resolution is assigned a status of **Intent Not Met**.

ENERGY

Resolution 6-18S

Wind Energy Regulations Required at Provincial Level

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED the Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) request the Government of Alberta to undertake the creation of a Renewable Energy Division within the AER to approve, regulate, and enforce the responsible development, reclamation, and assessment of renewable energy projects in the Province of Alberta;

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that renewable energy projects formally proceeding into the review and approval stage of the above-noted Renewable Energy Division are to be corporately approved and construction ready projects, not speculative or conditional in any way;

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that the RMA request the Government of Alberta to set up and enforce the collection of monetary funds towards the implementation of an Orphan Renewable Energy Fund to oversee potential future reclamation of abandoned renewable energy sites.

DEVELOPMENTS: RMA recognizes the important work that has been undertaken to improve the regulatory process for wind energy projects and other renewable energy projects, and RMA appreciates the opportunity to be involved in many of these important discussions such as the creation of an updated reclamation standard for renewable energy.

Although this resolution speaks to the creation of an approving and regulating body within the Alberta Energy Regulator (AER), the broader intent of this resolution is the responsible regulation of Alberta's renewable energy resources and projects. RMA believes progress is being made on this front. However, given the specific nature of this resolution, it is assigned a status of **Intent Not Met**, and RMA will continue to work with members and the Government of Alberta to improve economic, social, and environmental outcomes for renewable energy.

Resolution 10-18S

Tenure Extension Requirements for Unconventional Development

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) requests the Government of Alberta review and examine tenure extension requirements for unconventional resource development, removing the need for industry to plan activities around securing tenure, and thereby allowing more orderly development and reduced impact on the environment.

DEVELOPMENTS: The Government of Alberta's response indicates some progress made from the from the area-based regulation pilot project that occurred in the MD of Greenview, but the intent

of the resolution is not addressed through the pilot or other means, as the tenure system remains the same. This resolution is assigned a status of **Intent Not Met** and the RMA will continue to work with the Government of Alberta to fulfill the intent of this resolution.

Resolution 6-17F

Financial Support from AAMDC for Appeal of Virginia Hills/Dolomite Decision

Status: Accepted

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties, through financial resources, support Northern Sunrise County in the legal fees associated with this appeal in an act of solidarity as the overruling of this case is imperative for all municipalities that are owed taxes and outstanding penalties from insolvent organization.

DEVELOPMENTS: Through RMA's *Involvement in Member Legal Matters* policy, RMA provided financial support to Northern Sunrise County to appeal the court ruling referenced in this resolution. In 2019, the RMA provided additional information and support to assist the appeal to the Supreme Court of Canada. As such, this resolution is assigned the status of **Accepted**.

Resolution 10-17F

Provincial Industry-led Methane Flaring Strategy

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties advocate to the Government of Alberta to permit an industry-led approach to a reduction in methane emissions.

DEVELOPMENTS: RMA recognizes the significance of methane as a greenhouse gas and the need to reduce methane emissions. RMA appreciates the Government of Alberta's response which highlights that the targets outlined by the Government of Alberta will be met in a manner that imposes the lowest cost on industry. RMA is also encouraged that the formulation of the emissions reduction requirements are supported by industry representatives; however, the intent of the resolution requests that an "industry-led approach" be used to develop the methane emissions reduction requirements, which is not considered in the government response. As such, this resolution is assigned a status of **Intent Not Met**.

Resolution 5-17S

Secure Access to Natural Gas Pipelines

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties, in conjunction with the Federation of Alberta Gas Co-ops and Gas Alberta, request the governments of

Canada and Alberta to develop legislation and provide financial assistance to maintain certainty of access to natural gas pipelines for rural municipalities and gas co-ops in Alberta.

DEVELOPMENTS: RMA recognizes the on-going funding to support the Rural Gas Program and although the Government of Alberta has challenged Gas Alberta and the Federation of Alberta Gas Co-ops to identify alternative funding options on the decommissioning of transmission pipelines, the response lacks commitments of additional funding or legislative changes. As such, the resolution is deemed **Intent Not Met**.

Resolution 5-16F

Continued Operation of Coal-fired Power Generation Plants

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties requests the Government of Alberta to allow the continued operation of coal fired power generation plants while encouraging the coal industry and the electricity producers to explore alternate methods of utilizing coal for power generation and alternate uses for coal.

DEVELOPMENTS: The response from the Government of Alberta indicates that the transition away from coal fired power generation will continue forward as outlined in the Alberta Climate Leadership Plan. Though electricity generating companies are exploring the opportunity to convert existing coal fired units to natural gas, the extent to which this occurs is unclear and ultimately up to the electricity generating companies to decide. Even if this does occur, it is unclear how this will impact those communities that currently rely on coal fired electricity generation for employment and the tax base. Although the phase out of these facilities will continue over the next 12 years and impact will not be fully known until after that time. In the interim, the Coal Community Transition Fund has been created to support 12 projects in 17 communities across the province. The total funding is approximately \$5 million and will cover projects such as: strategic planning, tourism development, feasibility studies, and work to expand agribusiness, transportation, and high-tech industries. An additional \$50 million is being dedicated to areas impacted by the phase-out of coal fired power through the Community Generation Program announced in November 2018. However, the Government of Alberta's response does not satisfy the intent of the resolution and therefore, it has been assigned a status of **Intent Not Met**.

Resolution 13-16F

Northern Gateway Pipelines Support

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties advocate to the Government of Canada in support of the Northern Gateway Project and market access; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties collaborate with the Government of Alberta and other municipal associations to request that the Government of Canada conduct new consultations with Indigenous communities along the pipeline route prior to approving or denying the Northern Gateway Project; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties collaborate with the Government of Alberta and other municipal associations emphasizing the local, provincial, and national benefits that the Northern Gateway Project would provide and encourage support for the Project to be shared publicly.

DEVELOPMENTS: RMA appreciates the Government of Alberta's response to this resolution, particularly their recognition of the importance of pipelines to support market access for Alberta's oil and gas industry. Unfortunately, as the government response indicates, the Government of Canada exercised their jurisdiction and directed the National Energy Board to dismiss the Northern Gateway Pipeline project application. Although the Government of Alberta's response is appreciated and an encouraging sign for future collaborative advocacy efforts related to market access, this resolution is assigned a status of **Intent Not Met** due to the Government of Canada's decision.

Resolution 19-16F

Support for Multi-Stakeholder Task Force to explore Value-Added Oil and Gas Opportunities

Status: Accepted in Principle

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties urge the Government of Alberta to create a multi-stakeholder task force composed of representatives from industry, academia, non-governmental organizations, Indigenous communities, municipal government, the provincial government and the public no later than April 1, 2017 to make recommendations on how to grow and enhance value-added development in the oil and gas sector.

DEVELOPMENTS: The Government of Alberta response indicates a strong interest in prioritizing value-added opportunities associated with Alberta's energy sector. As it relates to the intent of the resolution, the formation of the Energy Diversification Advisory Committee (EDAC) appears to be an encouraging step towards embracing a multi-stakeholder approach to diversifying Alberta's oil energy industry. Through a report titled *Diversification, Not Decline: Adapting to the new energy reality*, the committee provided 36 recommendations to the Government of Alberta in the fall of 2017. Subsequently the Government of Alberta accepted the advice and proceeded to introduce Bill 1: The *Energy Diversification Act* to the Legislature on March 8, 2018. The Act outlines support for partial upgrading technologies to help attain more value from energy sources, the second round of the Petrochemicals Diversification Program, and petrochemical feedstock infrastructure. For this reason, RMA has assigned this resolution a status of **Accepted in Principle**.

ENVIRONMENT

Resolution 8-18S

Amendments Required for Provincial Recycling Regulations

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) advocate to the Government of Alberta to make the changes outlined under the 2013 proposed *Designated Materials Recycling Regulation*.

DEVELOPMENTS: RMA was informed of an upcoming review of Alberta's recycling systems that was intended to take place in the fall of 2018, but little information is currently known on the status of this review. Until such time that a review is completed, and changes are made to Alberta's recycling framework that align with the 2013 proposed *Designated Materials Recycling Regulation*, this resolution is assigned a status of **Intent Not Met**.

RMA is active on the Agriculture Plastics Recycling Group (APRG) which recently was awarded **\$1,000,000** to initiate a three-year agriculture plastics recycling program. RMA appreciates the Government of Alberta's recognition of this important initiative and will continue to work with the government to see to it that a permanent solution to the end-of-life management of agriculture plastics can be found.

Resolution 9-18S

Exemption of Seniors Housing from Requirement to Pay Carbon Levy

Status: Accepted in Part

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) urge the Government of Alberta to exempt housing management bodies from the provincial carbon levy;

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that the RMA advocate to Alberta Seniors and Housing for additional capital funds to be accessed by housing management bodies to install more efficient infrastructure and reduce greenhouse gas emissions in regulated housing facilities.

DEVELOPMENTS: The response provided by the Government of Alberta outlines some important supports provided to seniors and seniors housing facilities to offset the financial burden of the Alberta Carbon Levy. Although housing bodies will continue to pay the Carbon Levy, the provincial funding provided through the Affordable Housing Energy Savings Program (AHESP) fulfills the second request of this resolution by providing capital funds to allow for the installation of energy efficient infrastructure in regulated housing facilities. The resolution is assigned a status of **Accepted in Part**.

Several RMA members have also expressed concerns with seniors lodge residents being issued carbon levy rebates due to their income levels despite the fact that they are not responsible for

paying for lodge utilities such as heat and electricity. Were the rebates provided directly to housing management bodies responsible for actually paying the carbon levy on lodge utility bills, the increased costs associated with the levy would be at least partially offset. RMA will advocate on this approach as well.

Resolution 11-18S

Recycling of Solar Panels

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) request that the Government of Alberta expand existing recycling programs to include solar panels (photovoltaic modules).

DEVELOPMENTS: The majority of solar panels operate with a 25- to 30-year lifespan, and many of the systems installed since solar energy became financially viable are still in operation. This has meant that the recycling of solar panels has not yet become a widespread concern. However, there will be a time in the near future when an economic and pragmatic approach to solar panel recycling is needed.

RMA is interested in seeing proper end-of-life management programs developed for a wide range of materials used commonly in the province, including solar panels. RMA is awaiting a review of Alberta's recycling program, and hopes that solar panel recycling will be considered within that review. At the current time, this resolution is assigned a status of **Intent Not Met**.

Resolution 2-17F

Completion of Alberta's Land-use Framework Prior to Establishment of Conservation and Protected Areas for Species at Risk

Status: Accepted in Principle

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties requests that no additional conservation or protected areas be established, proposed or expanded in Alberta prior to the implementation of the remaining regional land-use plans.

DEVELOPMENTS: The regional planning process under the Land-use Framework has been slowed considerably and Alberta remains without regional plans in areas of significant future development. The lack of regional plans creates challenges when the Government of Alberta has moved forward with the protection or conservation of land without the context of the regional plans.

As noted in the response from the Government of Alberta, the Government of Canada has mandated the creation of caribou range plans – a process which is complicated by the lack of a regional plan in north western Alberta. This process has involved numerous consultations and recently, in March 2018, the Government of Alberta suspended the creation of caribou

protection plans and requested additional assistance from the Government of Canada to identify the socio-economic impacts of such plans.

This resolution speaks directly to the concerns of rural municipalities and the creation of conservation areas to protect caribou. Since the province has suspended this process in favour of a greater understanding of the impacts that future restrictions on development may have on local communities, this resolution is assigned a status **Accepted in Principle**. However, RMA is monitoring the proposed designation of several provincial parks and wildland parks in the Bighorn region, and how they may impact the expansion of protected areas. The proposal is currently in the consultation phase, and this resolution will be re-visited based on how the proposal proceeds.

Resolution 3-17F

Municipal Action on Caribou Recovery Planning

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties proactively lead inter-jurisdictional municipal level caribou population recovery planning across Western Canada.

DEVELOPMENTS: RMA has not undertaken inter-jurisdictional municipal level caribou population recovery across western Canada. RMA has, however, advocated member concerns on this issue and in March 2018, the Government of Alberta suspended the creation of caribou protection plans and requested additional assistance from the Government of Canada to identify the socio-economic impacts of such plans. RMA considers this an important step to recognize RMA member concerns.

This resolution is assigned a status of **Intent Not Met**.

Resolution 4-17F

Water Act Approvals for Municipal Projects on Municipal Land

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties urge the Government of Alberta to relax the requirement for formal approvals on all road construction on municipal right of ways less than 40 metres wide and consider alternate strategies for protecting water resources.

DEVELOPMENTS: Though the response from the Government of Alberta recognizes the challenges faced by municipalities who are subject to relatively short construction seasons and extensive infrastructure networks, the response does not indicate any change in process or regulation to the extent outlined in the resolution. This resolution is assigned a status of **Intent Not Met**.

Resolution 1-17S

Carbon Levy Exemption of Natural Gas and Propane for All Food Production Uses

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties appeal to the Government of Alberta to provide carbon levy exemption certificates for the use of natural gas and propane for all food production uses.

DEVELOPMENTS: Though it is positive that the Government of Alberta has indicated in its response that multiple ministries and the Alberta Climate Change Office are exploring alternative solutions to address concerns regarding the carbon levy that have been identified by the RMA, there is no indication that exemption certificates will be issued as requested in this resolution. The RMA's Climate Change Advisory Committee recognized the benefit that Alberta's agricultural lands serves as a carbon sink, and supports the need for continued advocacy for an exemption from the carbon levy on natural gas and propane used for food production. Due to the lack of commitment by the Government of Alberta in moving this forward, this resolution has been assigned a status of **Intent Not Met**. The RMA will continue to work with the government and monitor any resulting developments related to this issue.

Resolution 6-17S

Addendum to the Species at Risk Act

Status: Incomplete Information

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties urge the Government of Alberta to request the Government of Canada to amend the *Species at Risk Act* to include an addition to Section 64 of the Act to be entered as 64 (1)(c), to read as follows:

"The Minister(s), before implementing any order, plan, program, or designation that affects any proprietary interest in lands, held by title or leased, by any individual, corporation or entity other than government, shall enter into an agreement to establish the compensation for the loss of interest in those lands including relative legal expenses, or the loss of productivity of those lands, and for greater certainty, no order, plan, program, or designation shall be in force until the agreement is ratified by all parties involved."; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that Government of Alberta reaffirm to the Government of Canada that any action, program, plan, order, or designation contrived by the federal government that affects any lands or properties that are not within the proprietary responsibility of the Government of Canada as set out in Schedule Three of the *Constitution Act 1867*, will have no force or effect and considered ultra-vires to the Supreme Law of Canada as referenced by Section 92.13 *Constitution Act 1867* and assuredly, Section 52 of the *Constitution Act 1983*.

DEVELOPMENTS: To date, there have been no amendments to the *Species at Risk Act* according to public record, in addition to no response from the Government of Canada on this resolution.

This resolution has been assigned a status of **Incomplete Information**. The RMA will continue to follow-up on this issue.

Resolution 9-17S

Legal Opinion for Species at Risk Proposed Policies

Status: Accepted in Principle

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties (AAMDC) seek a legal opinion on the proposed *Species at Risk Act* policies to determine what effect that the proposed policies will have on municipal operations and the rights and freedoms of rural landowners;

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that if the legal opinion determines that the proposed *Species at Risk Act* policies will negatively impact rural landowners, that the AAMDC proceed with further action to work with the provincial and federal government on these proposed policies to demonstrate the social and economic impacts of policy implementation on the rural landscape.

DEVELOPMENTS: To fulfill the first part of this resolution, the RMA hired MLT Aikins to provide a legal opinion on the proposed *Species at Risk Act* (SARA) policies. The legal response identifies impacts for municipalities and rural landowners in regard to the policies, and RMA members should be aware of the implications some policies may have in regard to land-use planning and infrastructure project decisions. The legal response in its entirety is available on the RMA website.

The second part of the resolution addresses the socio-economic approaches to policy implementation. Recently, the Government of Alberta has delayed development of caribou range plans to further understand the socio-economic implications of such plans. Though it is unclear if this is emblematic of broader change within the province's processes, it is a recognition of the importance of understanding the impacts of SARA policies on local communities.

As the general intent of the resolution has been met, it has been assigned a status of **Accepted in Principle** and the RMA will continue to advocate on the importance of a socio-economic approach to policy implementation, as identified in the legal analysis.

Resolution 1-16F

Alberta Environment and Parks Approvals for Construction Projects

Status: Accepted in Principle

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties requests that consideration be given to safety concerns related to delayed environmental approval processing and supports the creation of a process for municipalities to receive timely approvals from Alberta Environment and Parks with regard to construction projects.

DEVELOPMENTS: The Government of Alberta response acknowledges the challenges that municipalities are facing in receiving timely approvals of works related to wetlands. The RMA is encouraged that Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP) has identified this as a problem and is in the process of developing an updated regulatory process for road works impacting wetlands which will balance provincial and municipal needs regarding regulatory compliance and timeliness. The Government of Alberta released the *Directive for Permittee-Responsible Wetland Construction in Alberta* and the *Alberta Guide to Wetland Construction in Stormwater Management Facilities* in December 2018 to support policy related to construction activities related to wetlands.

Alberta Environment and Parks has recognized challenges related to delayed approvals, and at the Fall 2018 RMA conference, the Minister identified that AEP is working on an online system to expedite this process. The RMA assigns this resolution a status of **Accepted in Principle**, and will monitor progress made.

Resolution 2-16F

Exemption of Municipalities from Carbon Levy

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties request the Government of Alberta to exempt all municipalities in Alberta from the carbon levy.

DEVELOPMENTS: The Government of Alberta response indicates that municipalities will not be provided an exemption from the carbon levy. Although the RMA appreciates the Government of Alberta's willingness to collaborate with municipalities to ensure that programs provided through Energy Efficiency Alberta and other bodies provide benefits to municipalities, there is still a concern that imposing the levy on municipalities will force an increase in municipal taxes and fees to maintain levels of service. The RMA's Climate Change Advisory Committee supported the need for a municipal exemption from the carbon levy, and as such, this resolution is assigned a status of **Intent Not Met**.

In 2018, the Government of Alberta announced a \$54 million grant to the Municipal Climate Change Action Centre to assist municipalities in climate change mitigation and adaptation programs and strategies.

Resolution 6-16F

Carbon Levy Exemption on Natural Gas and Propane Used for Agricultural Operations

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties request that the Government of Alberta amend the *Climate Leadership Implementation Act* to exempt farming operations from the carbon levy on natural gas and propane.

DEVELOPMENTS: The Government of Alberta response indicates that natural gas and propane used for agricultural purposes will not be exempted from carbon levy payments. The RMA appreciates the exemptions applied to marked gasoline and diesel for agricultural use, as well as other current and future tools implemented by the Government of Alberta to assist agriculture producers in balancing energy efficiency with operational viability. However, as the response does not indicate a willingness to meet the intent of the resolution, this resolution is assigned a status of **Intent Not Met**. The RMA's Climate Change Advisory Committee explored the impacts of the carbon levy on the agriculture industry and identified the need for continued advocacy for an exemption from the carbon levy on natural gas and propane used for food production. Advocacy on this issue will continue.

Resolution 15-16F

Species at Risk and the Need for an Overall Socio-Economic Impact Assessment

Status: Accepted in Principle

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties works with the Government of Alberta in a timely fashion, to complete an overall Socio-Economic Impact Assessment based on all the species at risk recovery plans and retention plans currently affecting the operations of all industries in the Province of Alberta, including but not limited to oil and gas, forestry, agriculture, tourism and mineral exploration.

DEVELOPMENTS: The Government of Alberta response summarizes the work done to date to develop strategies to comply with the *Species at Risk Act* (SARA) as it impacts Alberta's caribou population, and acknowledges that socio-economic impacts of habitat protection formed a component of the recovery planning process. In March 2018, the Government of Alberta delayed the development of caribou range plans to further understand the socio-economic implications of such plans. Though it is unclear if this is emblematic of broader change within the province's processes, it is a recognition of the importance of understanding the impacts of SARA policies on local communities. A socio-economic study of caribou recovery plans is currently underway. Therefore, this resolution is assigned a status of **Accepted in Principle**, and the RMA will continue to monitor the development of the socio-economic study.

HEALTH AND SENIORS

Resolution 14-17F

Cannabis Act

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties advocate that the Government of Alberta oppose the legalization of cannabis for recreational use in the Province of Alberta until a complete understanding of the implications that the legalization of cannabis will have on the health of individuals and on community safety is publicly available.

DEVELOPMENTS: While RMA appreciates that the Government of Alberta has conducted extensive public engagement, with input from health, law enforcement and other subject area experts to understand the impacts of cannabis legalization, the fact remains that there are significant gaps in academic, government and industry research efforts related to the impacts of legalized cannabis on public health and community safety. RMA acknowledges that there is a stark difference between understanding concerns from stakeholders and understanding actual implications gleaned from empirical research in communities in which cannabis is legalized. RMA recognizes that this issue is not well researched, however, staff have been actively assisting municipalities in adapting to these changes by providing workshops and information as it becomes available. This resolution is assigned a status of **Intent Not Met**. RMA will continue to advocate that the Government of Alberta lead social and health impact assessments as information becomes available.

INDUSTRY AND RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Resolution ER1-17F

Support for Trans Mountain Expansion Project

Status: Accepted in Part

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties (AAMDC) urge the Government of Alberta to continue to support the Trans Mountain Expansion Project so it can meet its commitments to delivering jobs and economic benefits and meeting its regulatory requirements during the construction and operation of the pipeline;

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that the AAMDC urge the Government of Canada to ensure that all regulatory processes that have been recommended for approval by the NEB and subsequently authorized by the Federal Governor in Council are permitted to proceed;

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that the AAMDC urge the Government of Canada to exercise ancillary powers in order to enact the comprehensive regulatory scheme for the Canadian public interest, including the right to timely permitting, thereby enabling the commencement of construction.

DEVELOPMENTS: The Government of Alberta has been a strong supporter of the Trans Mountain Expansion Project, and has worked to ensure Alberta's natural resources meet tidewater. Based on both the Government of Alberta's response to this resolution and recent comments from the Premier of Alberta and other provincial ministers, RMA is satisfied that the Government of Alberta is sufficiently supportive of this project.

The National Energy Board (NEB) response indicates that because the matters referenced in the resolution are currently before the NEB for decision, the NEB is unable to provide comment. Additionally, RMA has not yet received a response to this resolution from Natural Resources Canada.

The National Energy Board (NEB) response indicates that because the matters referenced in the resolution are currently before the NEB for decision, the NEB is unable to provide comment. Additionally, RMA is awaiting a response from Natural Resources Canada.

Given that the Government of Alberta's support of the Trans Mountain Expansion Project meets the intent of the first operative clause of the resolution, this resolution is assigned a status of **Accepted in Part**, and RMA will continue to advocate on this issue at the federal level.

Resolution 10-16F

Funding Model for Sand and Aggregate Pit Reclamation

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties encourage the Government of Alberta, in reviewing the *Community Aggregate Payment Levy Regulation*, to explore opportunities to allocate a portion of future provincial funds received from the

levy towards reclamation of orphaned and abandoned sites, should the current levy amount be adjusted to reflect current conditions and should provincial legislation be revised to better enforce the reclamation of gravel pits.

DEVELOPMENTS: The RMA is pleased by the Government of Alberta's willingness to improve aggregate management and regulations through the release of the revised *Community Aggregate Payment Levy Regulation*. However, the government has not addressed the possibility of increasing provincial funding to municipalities to address reclamation of abandoned pits. Therefore, this resolution is assigned a status of **Intent Not Met** and the RMA will continue to advocate on the need for funding to support reclamation of abandoned and orphaned pits.

Resolution 14-16F

Conservation and Reclamation of Class 1 Gravel Pits

Status: Accepted in Principle

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties request the Government of Alberta amend the *Code of Practice for Pits* to:

1. include an obligation for timely progressive reclamation including obligation deadlines that are enforceable; and
2. ensure securities reflect liability and provide sufficient incentive for progressive reclamation; and
3. ensure municipal land use and development approvals are obtained prior to the Province issuing pit registrations or accepting changes to existing pit registrations;

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties request that the Government of Alberta maintain inspection and enforce compliance with the *Conservation and Reclamation Regulations* and the *Code of Practice for Pits*; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties request that the Government of Alberta amend the *Code of Practice for Pits* to put into place enforceable reclamation requirements for gravel pits established prior to August 15, 1978 so as to enhance the quality of life and opportunities for rural residents.

DEVELOPMENTS: The RMA appreciates the opportunity to be involved with other stakeholders through the engagement sessions offered by Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP) to discuss pit reclamation and compliance requirements in early 2017. Recognizing that AEP will be drafting revisions to improve Alberta's pits program to address compliance and regulatory issues, the RMA assigns this resolution as a status of **Accepted in Principle** pending the results of this review. This resolution will continue to support RMA's advocacy efforts as revisions to the Code for Practice for Pits are undertaken. This resolution status will be reviewed as additional information becomes available.

MUNICIPAL GOVERNANCE AND FINANCE

Resolution 1-18S

Request for Implementation of the 2018 Assessment Year Modifier for Well and Pipeline Assessments

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) lobby the Government of Alberta to immediately implement the 2018 assessment year modifier to well and pipeline assessments as identified in the draft calculation.

DEVELOPMENTS: The freezing of AYMs at 2017 levels caused significant frustration for RMA members, many of whom had prepared budgets based on draft AYM projections that the Government of Alberta had shared with municipalities prior to the freeze. In early 2019, Alberta Municipal Affairs informed RMA that the AYM process was being reviewed as part of a larger assessment model review that also includes updating construction costs for machinery and equipment and pipeline properties and depreciation measures. This review is expected to conclude later in 2019 with changes implemented in time for the 2020 tax year.

While RMA and its members recognize the importance of having an improved process that is reflective of local costs and assessment variables, it is not clear what the result of this review will be, and why it was necessary to freeze 2018 AYM with no warning to accommodate the review. RMA is disappointed that municipal stakeholders (including RMA and the Alberta Assessors Association) have not been adequately involved in the review process. As assessment is critical to municipal viability, the municipal voice must be properly represented during future reviews. The Government of Alberta's continued freeze of the AYM means that this resolution is assigned the status of **Intent Not Met**.

Resolution 1-17F

Centralization of Industrial Properties Assessment

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties request Alberta Municipal Affairs to delay implementation of the centralization of industrial property assessment until such time as Ministry personnel can procure the appropriate resources to develop valuation standards, regulated assessment rates, undertake and complete impact studies, communicate and collaborate with municipalities so the identified risks to their primary revenue structure can be mitigated throughout the transition and beyond.

DEVELOPMENTS: The centralization of industrial assessment was a significant shift to the *Municipal Government Act* under the most recent review. This change has the potential to disrupt municipal assessment operations and remove established local knowledge of facilities within municipalities. The resolution requests a delay in the implementation of the centralization until

“Ministry personnel can procure the appropriate resources to develop valuation standards, regulated assessment rates, undertake and complete impact studies, communicate and collaborate with municipalities.” Since Alberta Municipal Affairs assumed their new responsibilities as of January 2018 and there was no delay, this resolution’s intent has not been fulfilled. RMA will, however, continue to monitor this transition to ensure it meets the needs of municipalities. This resolution is assigned a status of **Intent Not Met**.

Resolution 2-17S

Amendments to Section 348 of the *Municipal Government Act*

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties request that the Government of Alberta amend Section 348 of the *Municipal Government Act* to reflect that no Crown lending institutions be allowed to take priority over any claims due to the municipality.

DEVELOPMENTS: RMA members have been facing considerable challenges collecting unpaid taxes from property owners. A 2019 RMA member survey indicated that rural municipalities are facing a liability of between \$81 million and \$96 million in unpaid property taxes. These efforts are further frustrated by the hierarchy of claims that places municipalities at a significant disadvantage to collect unpaid property taxes against other liabilities that the property owner possesses. Three RMA members are currently involved in legal action as to whether the special lien provisions in section 348 are applicable to linear property. Should section 348 be deemed not applicable to linear property, municipalities will be even more challenged in claiming uncollected taxes. RMA is also planning to work directly with Municipal Affairs to clarify what options are available to municipalities under section 348 and other areas of the *Municipal Government Act*, both in cases where tax-owing companies are bankrupt or continue to operate.

As indicated in the response from Alberta Municipal Affairs, amendments to Section 348 are not being considered and therefore, this resolution is assigned a status of **Intent Not Met**.

Resolution 4-17S

Collection of Outstanding Taxes for Education Requisitions From the Province of Alberta

Status: Accepted

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties request that the Government of Alberta develop new tools or utilize existing mechanisms to ensure that municipalities that are unable to collect education property taxes through the tax recovery process be exempted from forwarding those uncollectible tax amounts to Alberta Education, or have the uncollectible amount refunded.

DEVELOPMENTS: In fall 2017, the Government of Alberta announced the Provincial Education Requisition Credit (PERC) program, under which municipalities who have no choice but to remit

requisitions to the Government of Alberta for unpaid education property taxes on linear oil and gas properties may apply to receive a credit equivalent to the amount of the requisition. PERC is funded through the Alberta School Foundation Fund's net asset fund.

At this point, PERC extends to the 2019 tax year, and is capped at \$10 million per year. As of November 2018, 37 applications had been processed and approximately \$3 million of credits had been issued. Applications are expected to continue to be accepted in 2019 and 2020. While PERC is a helpful program for municipalities, it is important to consider that municipalities are only eligible to collect PERC benefits after writing off a tax debt, which is highly unlikely to occur in cases where delinquent companies continue to operate.

This resolution is assigned a status of **Accepted**, and the RMA will continue to work with the Government of Alberta to support the long-term viability of the PERC program and develop other mechanisms to address unpaid linear property taxes.

The RMA conducted a survey of unpaid taxes on oil and gas companies and found that \$81 million in unpaid taxes remains outstanding despite the PERC program.

Resolution 8-17S

Oldman River Regional Services Commission Regional Planning Funding

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties request that the Government of Alberta provide long term, provincial funding to all municipalities for regional planning activities in a similar fashion to the Calgary Regional Partnership and the Capital Region Board.

DEVELOPMENTS: This resolution requests “long term, provincial funding to all municipalities for regional planning activities in a similar fashion to the Calgary Regional Partnership and the Capital Region Board”, but as outlined in the response provided from Alberta Municipal Affairs, funding offered through the Alberta Community Partnership (ACP) grant is not provided to meet the operational delivery of municipal services. ACP funding is instead provided to the Growth Management Boards (GMBs) to meet their legislated mandate. Though funding was provided to the Oldman River Regional Services Commission along with other regional planning service providers in 2017, this funding is not long term. ACP funding is available “to partnerships of two or more municipalities to develop or expand regional municipal service delivery,” but such funding is not intended to be long-term in nature, but rather to define governance roles and responsibilities related to the partnership.

Given the differences between the GMBs and other planning bodies in the province, it is difficult to draw direct comparisons but given the lack of additional long-term funding provided to regional planning organizations such as the ORRSC, this resolution is identified as **Intent Not Met**.

Resolution 3-16F

Implementation of the Centralized Industrial Property Assessment

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties call upon the Government of Alberta to delay or repeal the establishment of the Centralized Industrial Property Authority and the creation of the Provincial Assessor until such time as the appropriate studies, pilot projects, and consultation with all effected property owners has been completed and analyzed so the effectiveness of such a policy may be fully understood;

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties call upon the Government of Alberta to consult with the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties and the Alberta Assessors Association in order to answer the numerous procedural, policy and legal questions which arise from the decision to create the Centralized Industrial Property Authority under the newly created position of Provincial Assessor.

DEVELOPMENTS: The Government of Alberta response does not indicate a willingness to delay or repeal the process of transitioning to centralized assessment for designated industrial property. The response indicates that the Government of Alberta received sufficient feedback in favor of the move to centralized assessment during previous MGA consultation opportunities to warrant the decisions being final. RMA appreciates the Government of Alberta's willingness to share as much information as possible with municipalities related to procedural changes, and to take into consideration municipal input on the draft list of industrial properties designated as "major plants," but this does not address the intent of the resolution.

In an effort to support a successful transition to a centralized industrial property system, Alberta Municipal Affairs has implemented an interim hybrid model in which municipalities will be contracted to continue to assess industrial properties on behalf of the provincial assessor. While the RMA appreciates this approach, a preferred alternative may be to maintain this contractual arrangement permanently, as it allows municipal assessors to utilize their local knowledge with increased provincial oversight of the assessment process. In early 2019, Alberta Municipal Affairs confirmed that the hybrid model will not remain in use permanently, and that they are in the process of gradually terminating contracts under the hybrid assessment model between 2018 and 2020 as the transition to a centralized model is completed.

RMA and several RMA members have been involved in the planning of the transition to centralized industrial property assessment with the intent to minimize the disturbance to municipalities and assessors. This resolution is assigned a status of **Intent Not Met**, and RMA will continue to advocate on this issue.

Resolution 4-16F

Centralized Industrial Assessment

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties lobby the Government of Alberta to leave the responsibility of industrial assessment with municipal governments and to provide local assessors with updated manuals and regulations required to perform the services they currently provide to municipalities for industrial assessment.

DEVELOPMENTS: The Government of Alberta response does not indicate a willingness to leave the assessment of industrial property as the responsibility of municipal assessors. RMA appreciates the Government of Alberta's willingness to share as much information as possible with municipalities related to procedural changes associated with centralization, but this does not address the intent of the resolution.

In an effort to support a successful transition to a centralized industrial property system, Alberta Municipal Affairs has implemented an interim hybrid model in which municipalities will be contracted to continue to assess industrial properties on behalf of the provincial assessor. While RMA appreciates this approach, a preferred alternative may be to maintain this contractual arrangement permanently, as it allows municipal assessors to utilize their local knowledge with increased provincial oversight of the assessment process. In early 2019, Alberta Municipal Affairs confirmed that the hybrid model will not remain in use permanently, and that they are in the process of gradually terminating contracts under the hybrid assessment model between 2018 and 2020 as the transition to a centralized model is completed. This is disappointing as many municipalities have identified the hybrid model as an acceptable compromise between the previous local approach and complete centralization.

This resolution is assigned a status of **Intent Not Met**, and RMA will continue to advocate on this issue.

Resolution 17-16F

Capital Region Board Mandate Expansion

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties urge the Government of Alberta to direct the Capital Region Board to preserve their current mandate as any mandate expansion beyond that mandate becomes governance that interferes with the governance of local elected officials and their roles.

DEVELOPMENTS: The Government of Alberta response indicates that the Edmonton region's growth management board as established under the revised *Municipal Government Act* will likely exist with a broadened scope that includes service delivery, infrastructure, environmental issues, and economic prosperity. However, the response does not address the role that a potentially expanded GMB will have on the governance functions of individual municipalities that participate in it.

In October 2017, the Government of Alberta enacted the *Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board Regulation* under the *Municipal Government Act*. The regulation renamed the Capital Region Board as the Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board (EMRB). The regulation also broadened the EMRB's mandate from a focus on enabling responsible regional growth to include the following (see the *Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board Regulation*, s. 3(1)(a-f) for the complete mandate):

- Develop policies regarding the coordination of regional infrastructure investment and service delivery
- Promote the economic well-being and competitiveness of the Edmonton Metropolitan Region

To fulfill their expanded mandate, the EMRB is required to do the following (see the *Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board Regulation*, s. 3(2)(a-e) for the specific mechanisms by which the EMRB shall fulfill its mandate):

- Prepare a growth plan
- Prepare a servicing plan
- Develop and implement policies for the sharing of costs for regional projects of the Edmonton Metropolitan Region.

Based on the expansion of the EMRB's mandate to include service delivery and economic development, this resolution is assigned a status of **Intent Not Met**.

Resolution 23-16F

List of Municipal Electors

Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties request the Government of Alberta to amend the *Local Authorities Election Act* to provide municipalities a practical and economical option to use a list of electors for proof of elector eligibility.

DEVELOPMENTS: As outlined in the Government's response, municipalities have the ability to prepare a list of electors and may work with the Chief Electoral Office to prepare that list. However, due to requirements for enumerating electors, the extent to which this is considered a 'practical' and 'economical' option is dependent on each individual municipality and their local capacity. Alberta is the only province in Canada where enumeration is required for the development of a list of electors, and one of only two where the use of lists of electors is not legislated.

In 2018, the Government of Alberta conducted a review of the *Local Authorities Election Act* which resulted in significant changes to areas such as campaign contributions and finances, campaign expenses, advertising, and others. Unfortunately, no changes were made to requirements related to developing a list of municipal electors. As a result, this resolution is assigned a status of **Intent Not Met**.

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Resolution 7-18S

Standards for Property Contaminated by Fentanyl and Carfentanil

Status: Accepted in Principle

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) request the Government of Alberta to establish defined standards and consistent regulated approaches for inspecting property contaminated by fentanyl or carfentanil.

DEVELOPMENTS: The Government of Alberta response indicates that Alberta Health is aware of the lack of guidance related to the remediation of fentanyl-contaminated properties and is in the process of developing an approach or mechanism to address this issue. RMA assigns this resolution a status of **Accepted in Principle** and will monitor Alberta Health's progress in developing a final approach or mechanism.

Resolution 19-17F

Builder Licensing Program Impacts

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties (AAMDC) request that the Government of Alberta delay the implementation of the Builder Licensing Program until such time it can reasonably demonstrate that the impacts of such a program will yield a positive impact on the residential construction industry and its participants;

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that the AAMDC request that the Government of Alberta recognize and resolve the negative impacts of the *New Home Buyers Protection Act* on rural Alberta tradesmen, municipalities, and home owners.

DEVELOPMENTS: The Government of Alberta response indicates a positive reception to the builder licensing program and clarifies that the program does not directly apply to trades involved in residential construction. The resolution requests that the builder licensing program be delayed until "it can reasonably demonstrate that the impacts of such a program will yield a positive impact on the residential construction industry and its participants". Given that it is unclear whether a "positive impact" is resulting from the existing program, and it is implied in the resolution that the initial program was not having a positive impact, RMA assumes that continuing the program in its current format does not meet the intent of this resolution. Additionally, the government response does not include reference to the *New Home Buyers Protection Act*. This resolution has been assigned a status of **Intent Not Met**.

POLICING AND RURAL CRIME

Resolution 2-18S

Combatting Rural Crime

Status: Accepted in Part

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) request that the Government of Canada and the Government of Alberta develop and implement strategies and initiatives to prevent and combat rural crime, and punish those convicted of committing rural crime in a manner that will maximize deterrence;

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that the RMA, through the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, request the Government of Canada to continue with its review of the criminal justice system and sentencing reforms in a way that gets repeat offenders off the street for longer periods of time.

DEVELOPMENTS: In March 2018, the Government of Alberta implemented a Rural Crime Action Plan intended to reduce rural crime by better focusing resources in rural areas and prioritizing a proactive and strategic approach to addressing rural crime. The Action Plan included the following seven points:

- Crime reduction units: Specially trained officers will focus on arresting prolific offenders. This initiative will expand on a successful pilot project in Central Alberta.
- Specialized police intelligence: Six additional intelligence-focused RCMP officers plus four crime analyst positions will allow the RCMP to identify prolific offenders and target organized crime.
- Policing support centre: RCMP officers need to be on the streets protecting our communities, not behind a desk filling out paperwork. Twenty-three civilians will input investigative updates dictated over the phone by officers.
- More Crown prosecutors: \$2 million will allow the Alberta Crown Prosecution Service to hire up to 10 Crown prosecutors who will focus solely on rural crime.
- Better coordination: Sharing information with Alberta sheriffs, Fish and Wildlife Enforcement, Commercial Vehicle Enforcement and conservation officers will effectively make these officials additional “eyes and ears” for police.
- Enhanced technology: The RCMP will work with Alberta Justice and Solicitor General and other partners to explore new ways of using technology to target rural crime, including bait programs.
- Public education and engagement: The RCMP will engage and educate Albertans about crime prevention.

The Action Plan was supported by a \$10 million investment from the Government of Alberta.

In September 2018, the Government of Alberta and Royal Canadian Mounted Police jointly announced an 11% decrease in property crimes in rural Alberta detachments between January

and July 2018 – a reduction that is at least partly linked by the Government of Alberta to the initiatives in the Action Plan.

In February 2019, the Government of Alberta announced the next phase of the Action Plan, called “Project Lock-Up,” which will focus on collaboration between police and other enforcement organizations such as community peace officer, sheriffs, fish and wildlife officers, and others to increase patrols in “hard hit” rural areas, enhance victim support and communication, provide residents of “hard hit” areas with trace pens to increase the likelihood of recovering stolen property, and further enhance investigative response in high priority areas.

RMA is pleased with the Action Plan and the early positive indicators of its effectiveness in decreasing rural crime, and will advocate for the Government of Alberta to make a long-term funding commitment to sustain or expand the initial Action Plan.

RMA also forwarded this resolution to the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) as per the second operative clause. FCM reviewed the resolution and categorized it as “issues not within municipal and/or federal jurisdiction,” meaning it is not within the scope of FCM’s mandate, mainly because a request to advocate for “sentencing reforms in a way that gets repeat offenders off the street for longer periods of time” is not a specific municipal issue, although it would indirectly support municipalities by helping to address rural crime. RMA is disappointed with this response but will continue to work with FCM to share the rural Alberta perspective on issues related to crime and justice.

RMA assigns this resolution a status of **Accepted in Part**, and will continue to advocate on this issue at the provincial level and to the FCM.

Resolution 3-18S

Increase Crown Prosecutor Staffing Levels for Rural Municipalities

Status: Accepted in Principle

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) encourage the Government of Alberta to increase Crown prosecutor staffing levels as well as relevant administrative staff for rural municipalities and collaborate with rural municipalities to ensure that court cases are being sufficiently prosecuted in a timely manner.

DEVELOPMENTS: As indicated in the Government of Alberta response, two million dollars has been allocated under the Rural Crime Action Plan to hire up to ten Crown prosecutors to focus on rural crime. RMA is pleased with this commitment as well as the Government of Alberta’s swiftness in hiring eight of ten prosecutors to this point.

This resolution is assigned a status of **Accepted in Principle**, and will be reviewed in the future when information on the extent to which the increase in Crown prosecutors have shortened waiting periods for prosecution is available.

Resolution 12-18S

Victim Services Units Funding

Status: Accepted in Part

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) lobby the Government of Alberta to use the monies from the Victims of Crime Fund to adequately fund provincial victim services units so they can provide the staffing levels required to assist victims of crime.

DEVELOPMENTS: The Government of Alberta response indicates action to divert greater amounts from the Victims of Crime Fund to support victim services units. More specifically, the Government of Alberta has increased the maximum annual funding that victim services units in Alberta's large urban centers can access, as maximum amounts will increase from \$300,000 to \$500,000 in Edmonton and Calgary, and from \$150,000 to \$300,000 in Red Deer, Grande Prairie, Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, and the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo (which had already been temporarily increased to \$265,000 due to wildfires in 2016). While this is a positive development, the maximum annual funding amount for all other victim services units appears to have remained at \$150,000. As some rural areas in Alberta are experiencing extremely high crime rates, and victim services unit funding is based on an allocation formula that takes into consideration local crime rates, RMA believes that the maximum potential annual funding amount should be increased for all victim services units to allow for consistent access to funding across the province, as crime rates do not necessarily align with population.

RMA assigns this resolution a status of **Accepted in Part**, and will continue to advocate on this issue.

TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Resolution 11-17S

Review of Standard Practices for Installation of High Tension Cable Barriers on Two-Lane Provincial Highways

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties urge the Government of Alberta to review Alberta Transportation's Standard Practices for installation of High Tension Cable Barriers (HTCBs) on two-lane provincial highways to ensure Alberta has the safest possible highways.

DEVELOPMENTS: The Government of Alberta's response includes information detailing design options to ensure that HTCBs on two-lane highways are as safe as possible and do not impact snow removal or oversized vehicle travel on such highways. However, the resolution requests Alberta Transportation to review the current practices, which the response does not indicate a willingness to undertake.

This resolution is assigned a status of **Intent Not Met** and the RMA will continue to advocate on this issue.

Resolution 7-16F

Vegetation Management on Alberta Provincial Highways

Status: Accepted in Part

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties urge the Government of Alberta to restore funding for summer maintenance programs for its vegetation management (weed control and mowing) along provincial highways; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties request the Government of Alberta to deliver a more effective maintenance program for vegetation management (weed control and mowing) along one, two and three digit highways in the province, which includes the herbicide application and other measures to control noxious weeds, prohibited noxious weeds and any unsafe vegetation on the full right of way; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties request Alberta Transportation give the option in all districts of the province to enter into service agreements with municipalities for weed control.

DEVELOPMENTS: The Government of Alberta response indicates a plan to resume full vegetation management practices along provincial highways in the summer of 2017. This response meets the first "ask" of the resolution, which is to restore previous vegetation management funding.

The second “ask” in the resolution calls for not only the return of funding, but an improved vegetation management program compared to that previously utilized prior to the reduction in funding. At this point the Government of Alberta response indicates only a return to previous levels, and therefore does not meet the resolution’s second “ask.”

The third “ask” in the resolution calls for Alberta Transportation to enter service agreements with municipalities for the actual delivery of vegetation management. The Government of Alberta response indicates that this option will be considered, and may move forward based on further analysis of capacity and standards. In March 2018, the Minister of Transportation indicated that municipalities would be eligible to bid on maintenance contracts for provincial highways. RMA is encouraged by this and will follow up with Alberta Transportation in the future.

As the Government of Alberta response meets part of the resolution’s intent, RMA assigns this resolution a status of **Accepted in Part**, and will continue advocating on it in the future.

Resolution 16-16F

Support for Continuation of Crude Oil Tanker Activity Along the Northern Coast of British Columbia

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties advocate to the Government of Canada expressing support for continued tanker activity along the northern coast of British Columbia.

DEVELOPMENTS: Shortly after RMA’s Fall 2016 Convention, during which this resolution was endorsed, the Government of Canada formally announced that they would introduce legislation to establish a moratorium on tanker traffic along B.C.’s north coast. According to the Government of Canada’s website, “the moratorium will cover the Great Bear Rainforest/Great Bear Sea area: an area from the Alaska/B.C. border down to the point on B.C.’s mainland adjacent to the northern tip of Vancouver Island, and this includes Haida Gwaii. The new legislation will prohibit oil tankers carrying crude oil or persistent oil products as cargo from entering or leaving ports and marine installations in this area.”

Due to this announcement, RMA elected not to submit formal correspondence to the Government of Canada calling for the continuation of tanker traffic in the area, as the Government of Canada made it clear that the matter was closed and a decision had been reached. The moratorium, Bill C-48, has passed through the House of Commons and is now being reviewed by a Senate Committee. Earlier in 2016, RMA provided input to the Government of Canada on this issue by responding to this question that the Government of Canada posed to stakeholders:

What do you believe are the most important issues the Government should address in its plan to formalize a crude oil tanker moratorium?

RMA's response was as follows:

Placing a moratorium on any transportation mode or route is a drastic decision and should not be made without intensive analysis of local and national implications, projected future transportation needs and opportunities, and potential changes in technology that may render the moratorium unnecessary. Based on the discussion material that Transport Canada has shared with stakeholders, it is difficult to know the extent or level of analysis that has been undertaken to his point.

The AAMDC understands the importance of considering and mitigating local environmental impacts of tanker traffic on BC's north coast. However, such a significant decision must consider both local issues and upstream/indirect issues that may be caused by a moratorium. While the intent of a moratorium is to protect a relatively localized ecosystem, the potential social and economic impacts may spread much farther. For example, the tanker moratorium effectively eliminates the development of Enbridge's proposed Northern Gateway pipeline from Bruderheim, Alberta to Kitimat, BC. For rural Alberta, the development of a pipeline to move crude oil from Alberta to a port facility for tanker transport to foreign markets is very important for the long-term sustainability of the oil and gas industry. While the moratorium is not directly related to the sustainability of the industry, it should not be placed into effect without considering the long-term impacts it may have on the industry. The formalization of a moratorium should be accompanied by a commitment from the Government of Canada to approve and facilitate the development of an alternative pipeline corridor from Alberta to a coastal port facility.

This input was provided prior to the submission or endorsement of resolution 16-16F, as the RMA Board of Directors identified the potential tanker moratorium and the associated consultations as an emerging issue worthy of RMA input.

Due to the moratorium, this resolution is assigned a status of **Intent Not Met**.

OTHER

Resolution 5-18S

Provincial Government Consultation and Communication Protocol with Municipalities

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) appeal to the Government of Alberta to establish and maintain a uniform consultation and communication protocol with municipal elected officials which is applicable to all provincial bodies;

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that through this consultation and communication protocol, the Government of Alberta recognizes and acknowledges the legislated significance of municipal elected officials, and that the Government of Alberta engage municipalities openly and transparently to provide input and feedback on the consultation and communication protocol from inception through to implementation.

DEVELOPMENTS: RMA appreciates the effort that Alberta Municipal Affairs have demonstrated in involving RMA and its members in consultations related to the *Municipal Government Act* review. However, the resolution requests a uniform approach to gathering direct input from municipal elected officials on issues that impact municipalities, regardless of ministry. In endorsing this resolution, RMA members have indicated that the quality of consultation varies widely, and a consistent approach is needed to ensure the municipal voice is consistently heard.

RMA assigns this resolution a status of **Intent Not Met** and will continue to work with the Government of Alberta to improve the consultation process with municipalities.

Resolution 9-17F

AAMDC Refusal to Engage in Exploratory Discussion to Merge with AUMA

Status: Accepted

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties (AAMDC) refuse to enter into any discussions with the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association (AUMA) that would result in any attempt to merge the AAMDC with AUMA.

DEVELOPMENTS: The AUMA is a valued partner for RMA, and collaborating to create a unified municipal voice on issues of mutual importance is an effective advocacy approach. However, RMA respects its members' direction that an independent rural municipal voice is needed in Alberta, and is committed to continuing to serve that role. This resolution is deemed **Accepted**.

Resolution 13-17F

AAMDC Advisory Committee to Support the Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission in Reviewing Charitable Gaming in Alberta

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties establish an advisory committee with a mandate to provide a rural perspective in support of the efforts of the Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission's commitment in moving forward with changes in the charitable gaming funding to treat all organizations equally across the province.

DEVELOPMENTS: RMA recruited members and initiated the committee in spring 2018. Since then, the committee has met several times. In December 2018, the committee finalized their report and recommendations, which were endorsed by the RMA Board of Directors. The committee also presented their findings to members at the Spring 2019 convention. The recommendations are expected to support RMA, its members, and rural charitable organizations in providing input into the Alberta Gaming, Liquor and Cannabis Commission's review of the current charitable gaming model, expected to take place in 2019. This resolution is assigned a status of **Accepted**.

Resolution 15-17F

Stopping the Implementation of Proposed Federal Tax Reforms

Status: Accepted in Part

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties urge the Government of Canada not to proceed with the proposed federal tax reforms that will negatively impact small to medium enterprises and the agricultural sector.

DEVELOPMENTS: The Government of Canada response indicates that several proposed tax reforms will not be implemented due to concerns expressed by RMA and other stakeholders across Canada. In particular, the response highlights the decision to not proceed with proposed measures to address the multiplication of the lifetime capital gains exemption due to the potential impacts on intergenerational transfers of family businesses, including farms.

The Government of Canada will also not implement changes related to the conversion of income into capital gains due to their potential unintended impacts on small businesses and farms. Additionally, the government of Canada plans to consult farmers, fishers, and other business owners on how to better accommodate intergenerational transfers of businesses while protecting the fairness of the tax system.

While RMA is pleased with the Government of Canada's willingness to re-evaluate these proposed changes, it should be noted that other proposed changes, such as those to address passive investment and its use by high income individuals will persist. For example, changes to passive income requirements for small businesses that will result in the accumulation of more than \$50,000 in passive income subjecting some business earnings to a higher tax rate was implemented on January 1, 2019. As resolution 15-17F is very broad in its direction that all proposed federal tax reforms not be implemented, RMA assigns this resolution a status of

Accepted in Part, and appreciates the Government of Canada's willingness to re-evaluate and not proceed on several aspects of their initial proposal.

Resolution ER3-17F

Effective Representation for Rural Albertans in Alberta's Legislative Assembly

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Government of Alberta amend section 13 of the *Electoral Boundaries Commission Act* to establish up to three new electoral divisions to accommodate the need for effective representation of Alberta's growing urban population, while not sacrificing current rural representation; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties (AAMDC) urge the Government of Alberta to prioritize effective representation for rural Alberta by not approving a reduction in the number of constituencies in rural Alberta; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that the AAMDC request the Government of Alberta to not implement the Alberta Electoral Boundary Commission's final recommendations until the following principles are prioritized:

- That geographic size limitations, local variations in population density, and accessibility of MLAs be prioritized as a determining factor in developing electoral boundaries; and
- Constituencies structure should be maintained to combine urban and rural areas to include a balance of urban and rural populations to reflect the urban-rural connectedness and dependency that exists on the ground for Alberta's regions; and
- To the extent possible, no ridings fracture rural municipalities into multiple constituencies.

DEVELOPMENTS: The government response to the resolution indicates that no additional changes were made or will be made to electoral boundaries and that the changes were codified in legislation in December 2017. As such, the resolution is assigned a status of **Intent Not Met**. RMA will continue to advocate for effective rural representation in future reviews of Alberta's electoral boundaries, and work with urban MLAs to ensure issues important to rural Albertans are understood and acted upon in Alberta's legislature.

Resolution 8-16F

Resolution Process – Frequency of Similar or Duplicate Resolutions

Status: Accepted

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED the Association of Alberta Municipal Districts and Counties (AAMDC) Board of Directors review the AAMDC Resolution Process Policy with the objective of limiting the frequency in which resolutions that duplicate previously endorsed resolutions or deal with subject matter recently addressed through endorsed resolution are presented to the convention floor.

DEVELOPMENTS: RMA initiated a thorough review of the RMA Resolution Process Policy in the spring of 2017 which involved engagement with the RMA's resolutions committee, members, board of directors, and parliamentarian. Based on input received, the policy has been amended and includes clarification on the process the Resolutions Committee can use to address the frequency of similar or duplicate resolutions being brought forward. The RMA Board of Directors approved the revised policy in summer 2017. The revised policy was shared with members notifying of the key changes, and is being implemented effective immediately. As the policy reflects the request outlines in this resolution, RMA assigns this resolution a status of **Accepted**.

Resolution 20-16F

Casino Opportunities for Charitable Organizations

Status: Accepted in Principle

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties urge the Government of Alberta to change Alberta's charitable gaming model so as to provide equity to all charitable organizations in Alberta, by addressing the disparity between the funding provided, and the frequency of opportunities available to charitable organizations in major urban centers compared with those in rural communities.

DEVELOPMENTS: The Alberta Gaming, Liquor and Cannabis Commission (AGLC) response indicates an acknowledgement that the current charitable gaming model is disadvantageous to charities operating in rural Alberta. RMA is pleased that the AGLC is planning to revise the current model and hopes to be a part of the process, with the recommendations from the RMA Charitable Gaming Advisory Committee forming the basis of RMA's position. AGLC began their consultation process with a direct survey to eligible charitable organizations in 2019, and further consultation with a broad range of stakeholders, including municipalities, is expected to take place later in 2019. As such, this resolution is assigned a status of **Accepted in Principle** and will be re-evaluated based on the outcome of the review.

Resolution ER1-16F

Save Vegreville's Case Processing Center

Status: Intent Not Met

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties urge the federal department of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship reconsider their decision to close the Case Processing Centre (CPC) in Vegreville.

DEVELOPMENTS: The Government of Canada response provides the rationale under which Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada made the decision to relocate their case processing centre from Vegreville to Edmonton. Unfortunately, the letter does not indicate whether the Government of Canada conducted a local impact analysis on Vegreville and the surrounding rural areas, or whether potential community impacts were considered as a

component of their decision-making process. Most importantly, the response does not indicate a willingness to reconsider the final relocation decision.

In 2017, a report commissioned by the Town of Vegreville indicated that as many as 420 people could relocate from Vegreville as a result of the case processing centre closure. In addition to the Town of Vegreville report, the closure decision has drawn concern from oppositions MPs, as well as the Public Service Alliance of Canada.

The Vegreville case processing centre was closed in September 2018, with operations re-located to Edmonton. Following the relocation, the federal Public Sector Labour Relations and Employment Board decided that Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada breached the collective agreement of the case processing centre employees by not providing them with adequate departure benefits, such as buyouts and education allowances. The decision required the Public Service Alliance of Canada (the union representing the case processing centre workers) to negotiate and agreement with Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada. The outcome of the negotiations are not known. Although the negotiations likely resulted in workers unwilling to move to Edmonton receiving their collectively bargained benefits, it did not impact the relocation of the case processing centre.

This resolution is assigned a status of **Intent Not Met**.

CONTRIBUTORS

The Rural Municipalities of Alberta wishes to thank the Board of Directors members who provided content, input, and advice to this report card:

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